

zigzag 68

30 PENCE

JAN. 1977

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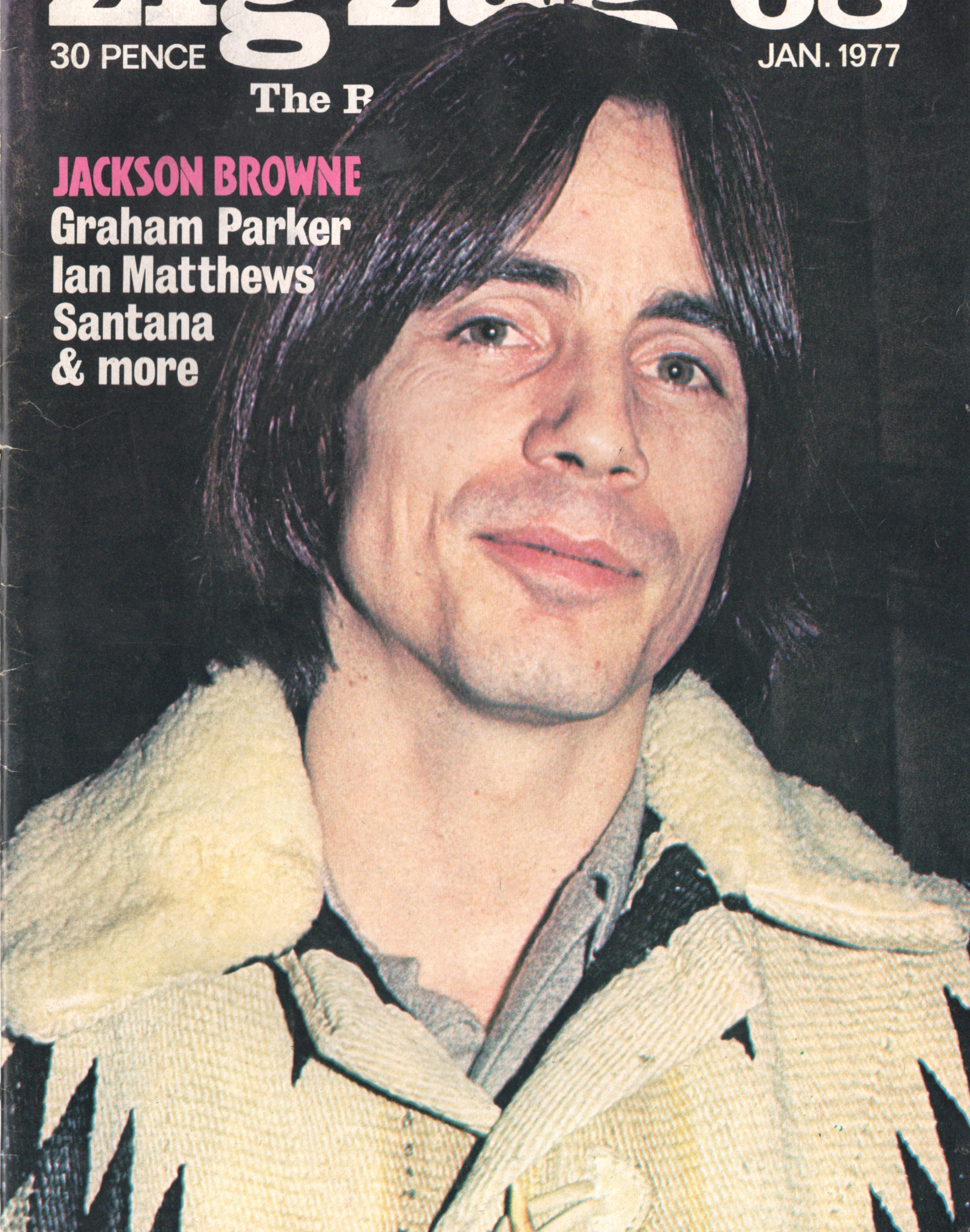
JACKSON BROWNE

Graham Parker

Ian Matthews

Santana

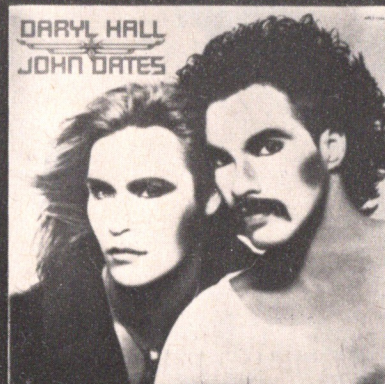
& more



The new year has begun...

For a sensational band, 1977 is off to a magnificent start. The U.K. tour is due to begin, and all is set for a fantastic year!

Daryl Hall & John Oates



Daryl Hall & John Oates
APL1 1144 Cass. PK 11701

[this is just the start]

January

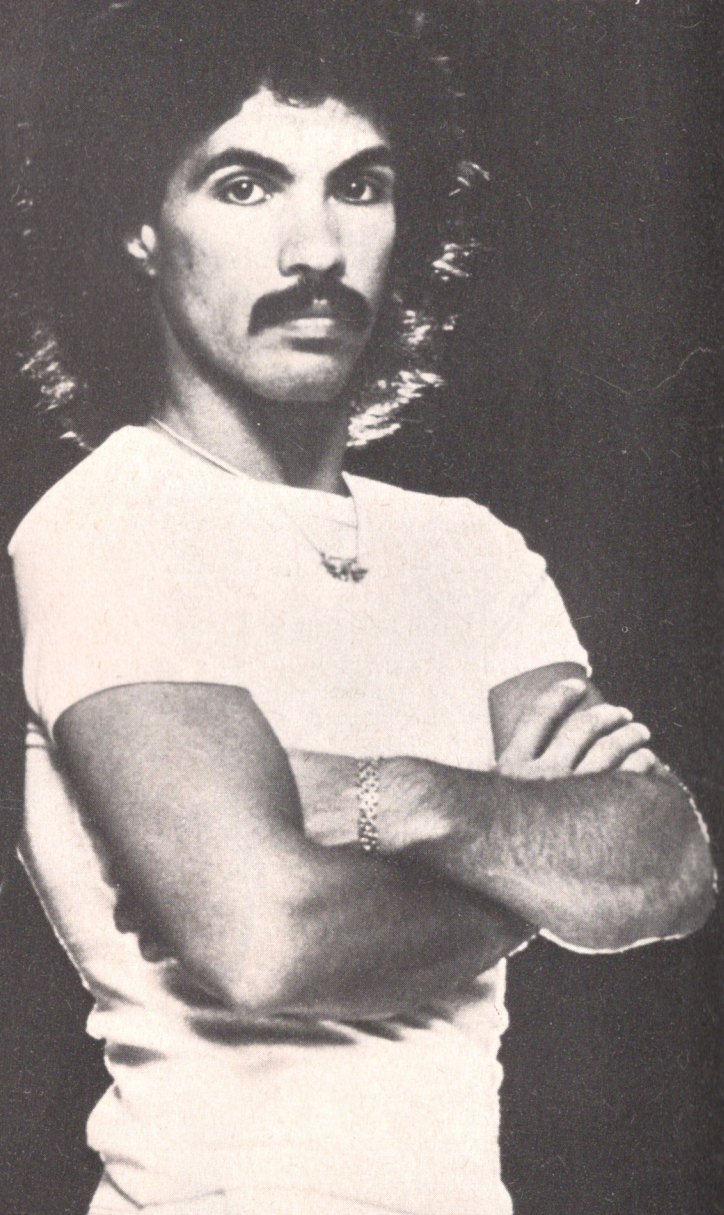
- 12 The Odeon, Birmingham.
- 13 Capitol Theatre, Cardiff.
- 14 Colston Hall, Bristol.
- 15 The Dome, Brighton.
- 16 New Theatre, Oxford.
- 18 City Hall, Sheffield.
- 19 ABC Theatre (Ardwick), Manchester.
- 20 Gaumont, Ipswich.

- 21 Winter Gardens, Bournemouth.
- 23 Odeon Theatre, Southampton.
- 24 City Hall, Newcastle.
- 25 Civic Hall, Wolverhampton.

- 26 City Hall, Newcastle.
- 27 Apollo Centre, Glasgow.
- 28 Playhouse, Edinburgh.
- 30 Trentham Gardens, Stoke.

February

- 15 Odeon Theatre, Hammersmith.



Bigger Than Both Of Us
APL1 1467 Cass. PK 11740

Their current hit single 'RICH GIRL' is available now. RCA 2757

RCA

CONTENTS

Into the Silver Jubilee Year with icicles under the eaves and renewed vigour in our hearts...and a Happy New Year to you all. Thanks to everybody who sent us Christmas cards and greetings and radiated positive vibes in the face of all this nasty pessimism, doomy gloom and negative thinking that seems to have gripped the country. Peckers up, folks... 1977 is going to be a cracker (I have it on good authority).

OK, what have we got here? Well, we kick off with the first installment of the history of JACKSON BROWNE. I must have read about twenty different versions of his career - all totally confused...so we set out to put the record straight. The poor chap didn't know whether he was coming or going - people from every newspaper and radio station in the country queuing up to interview him until he could barely talk anymore. He was extremely pleasant and charming to us, despite it all - and our thanks to him for his patience and fortitude. Tobler interviewed him for Radio One's Insight, Kendall did him for National RockStar, and I did him for Zigzag...then we put all our interviews together in order to bring you the most detailed and complete picture we could. Tom Sheehan took a million pictures of him and then contracted alcoholic poisoning over Christmas. (He appears to have survived, and has almost totally sworn off alcohol...from now on, he intends to limit his intake of Young's potent brews to a gallon a day.)

The phlegmatic Andy Childs caught up with GRAHAM PARKER the day before he left for yet another marathon tour of the colonies, and gives us the lowdown on the fellow's chequered past...bar brawls in Morocco, Birds Eye fish fingers in Gibraltar, acid cases in engineering factories, and hamburgers in Finsbury Park. It seems an unlikely tale, but it's all true.

For the benefit of those amongst you who were foolish enough or unfortunate enough to miss the Carpenters on their recent visit, our bastion of trenchancy, John Walters, put aside his Cockburns and pheasant, donned his pink velvet baggies, left his Eastcheap stew, and blustered forth to witness their Palladium concert...solely to bring you the event in all its raw and frenetic splendour. He also responds to his fan mail, chews the cud in his customary manner, and treats us to part three of The Rose Brennan Story - 'The Storm Clouds Gather'.

John Tobler, star of stage, newsprint and the airwaves, found time to conclude his exploration of IAN MATTHEWS and is now searching for another suitable subject for a 3 part epic. Any ideas? (Voices off: Yes...shoot the old bugger before he finds something!)

While SANTANA were buzzing around Britain recently, they hospitably made room for Kendall, who pried out enough fax and info to fill 4 pages and a family tree. Their influence on the fellow was most peculiar: he now refuses to be seen dead in anything but a Persil white 3-piece suit, and his unique collection of illicit pulp magazines has been dumped in favour of a complete library of quasi-mystical tomes such as 'Introduction To Truth and Beauty'. Very strange.

Needsy, of course, has gone the other way. He seems to spend considerable time in some rat-infested squat in West London, tenanted by one Sid Vicious. We tend to see very little of Kris these days, and when we do he merely bawls us out. He said the cover of the last issue looked like "a travel brochure published by a cheap tour operator", and he was glad that none of his work appeared within. (He wasn't the only one). The Needs quill has been slack again this month, but he promises to "come back with a bang" in the next issue - whatever that means. Meanwhile, relationships continue to deteriorate: "If I'm over the top...you lot are over the hill", he says - his words edged with acrimony.

The Backpager chronicles the fiery birth-pangs of the Move - as described by their flamboyant manager Tony Secunda, who looks after the very much more sedate Steeleye Span these days...no telly smashing there.

Before I forget - for all you eager beavers who keep writing - the history of THE BYRDS, which was cut off in its prime around issue 42, is currently being resuscitated. Two more chapters are in the can, and we hope to resume the series very soon. Does anybody remember the Byrds?

What else is there? Some reviews, the results of Mac's 'bed companion poll', plus all the usual sniff snaff...all compressed into one action-packed 36 page issue. Oh yes - we've had to raise the price. This is, of course, due to circumstances entirely beyond our control: those money grabbing Swedes have decided to raise the cost of paper by an alarming 25%...so we've had to respond with an increase (though we've kept ours down to 20%). Six bob! My godfathers...I can remember when it was only two bob.

Those, however, were not the days.

Pete.



ZIGZAG

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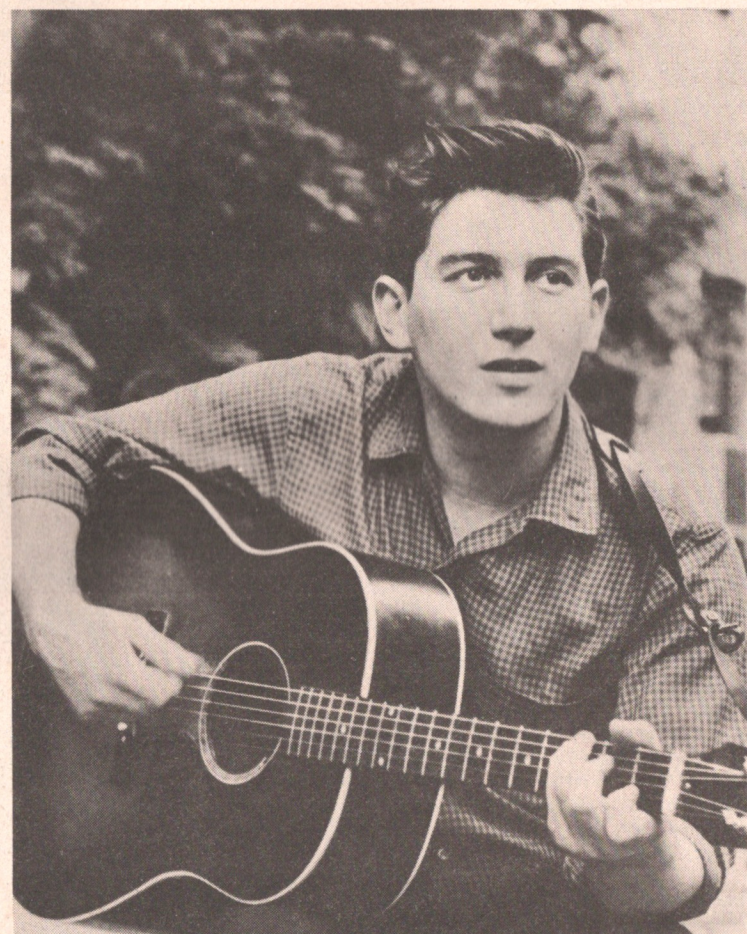
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• TOM BAKER '76 •

FOR THOSE WHO MARCHED WITH HIM.
FOR THOSE WHO CARED THE WAY HE DID.
FOR THOSE WHO NEVER EXPERIENCED THE HUMANITY OF PHIL OCHS.



HE WAS AN OHIO STATE JOURNALISM DROPOUT WHO WENT TO GREENWICH VILLAGE IN 1962 AND BECAME A MAJOR CATALYST IN INFLUENCING A GENERATION WHO BELIEVED AND ACTED IN THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

HE SANG FOR CIVIL RIGHTS. HE SANG FOR OPPRESSED COAL MINERS. HE SANG FOR AN AMERICA THAT WAS CHANGING. IT WAS THE ERA OF THE TOPICAL SONG, AND NONE WERE MORE TOPICAL THAN THE SONGS OF PHIL OCHS: 'I AIN'T MARCHIN' ANYMORE', 'DRAFT DODGER RAG', 'LOVE ME, I'M A LIBERAL', 'OUTSIDE OF A SMALL CIRCLE OF FRIENDS', ETC.

AT A GREAT SACRIFICE TO HIS PROFESSIONAL CAREER OCHS NEVER HESITATED TO GIVE HIS TIME, ENERGY, AND ENORMOUS TALENT TO THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

'CHORDS OF FAME' IS A TWO-RECORD SET CONTAINING 24 OF HIS SONGS INCLUDING 'POWER AND THE GLORY', 'CHANGES', 'THERE BUT FOR FORTUNE', AND THOSE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED. IT ALSO CONTAINS EXTENSIVE LINER NOTES AND PHOTOS OF OCHS AT VARIOUS STAGES OF HIS CAREER.

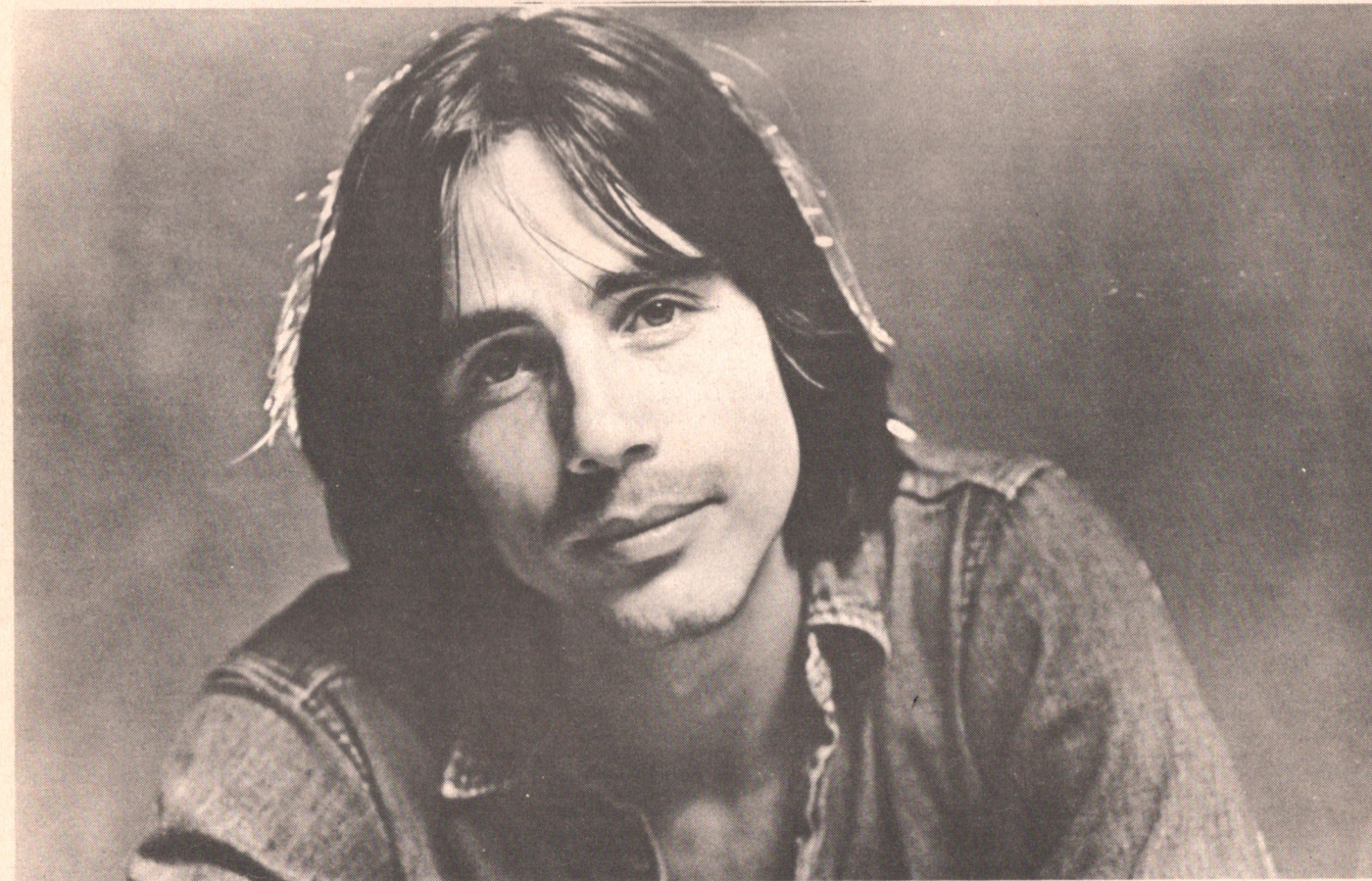
IN THE SONG 'CHORDS OF FAME' HE WROTE: 'GOD HELP THE TROUBADOUR WHO TRIES TO BE A STAR!'
PHIL OCHS DIED APRIL 9, 1976 AT THE AGE OF 35.

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HAPPY-GO-LUCKY ME!



JACKSON BROWNE

*The past chronicled, history untangled, rumours expounded,
myths unravelled, legends probed, wild tales explored, flimsy documents examined,
exaggerations refuted, mis-reportings explained, words ungarbled, and facts unjumbled*

ZZ: You're a Taurean, born 1949, in West Germany?

JB: Right - in Heidelberg. My father was overseas with the American Army newspaper - the European Stars & Stripes.

ZZ: And he was a musician too, which is how you became involved?

JB: Yes, he was a very good piano player. My folks were really into dixieland jazz, and my dad wanted me to play trumpet. So I used to sit around - I'd have been about eight years old I guess - and he would play me these records and I'd cop the licks... Red Nichols, Louis Armstrong, that kind of thing. I had Louis Armstrong solos down to the note, or so I thought... it was probably more like a Readers Digest version of his solos. The problem was, however, that I missed the whole point - I didn't understand what jazz was all about.

ZZ: How do you mean?

JB: Well, I would sit around and he'd be telling me all about progressions and fifths, and I didn't care. I just wanted to cop other people's solos. I just didn't understand... I never understood that jazz was a system of people digging one another... and I didn't understand until I was in a band myself. I mean that. I didn't understand what it meant to be in a band,

to dig on other musicians and co-operate, until I first started playing with a regular band.

ZZ: When did you switch to the guitar?

JB: Well, I got totally fed up and frustrated as a kid. I really wanted to play piano, but my father wouldn't let me... it was "play the trumpet, play the trumpet". Eventually I just felt trapped with it, and gave it up. It faded right out of my life - not just the trumpet, but music too.



THE
PARADOX
AND THE
DIRT BAND

ZZ: Your interest in music was rekindled during the folk boom days of the mid-60s..

JB: Yes, during my last couple of years at high school - Sunnyside High School, which I left in June 1966.

ZZ: ...and the focal point appears to have been the fabled folkie haunt called The Paradox. Can you tell us about that?

JB: Sure. The Paradox was a folk club in a town called Tustin - or maybe it was in Orange... it's kind of hard to tell which town is which out there in the wasteland. You could go to the Paradox and hear people like Rambling Jack Elliott and Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee - you know, the folk legends of the time - but the funny thing was that mixed in with those people were things like the Pepsi Singers... Kingston Trio type groups that sold tickets - because the guy had to stay in business.

It was really nice. They had hootenannies there, and about 20 or 30 of the regulars were always forming different groups. People like Bill Cunningham were around then, and John McEuan was always bringing in bluegrass players he'd found out at some festival. There was also a lot of folk music happening in Long Beach, which was about 20 miles away... but there were only a few clubs in Southern California that were really interesting, that were like real coffee houses.

ZZ: Did the folkies tend to frown on the rock music of the day?

JB: Oh no, we listened to the Beatles all day long, and I remember wishing that I could write a song as good as 'Walk Away Renee' by the Left Banke. I loved that.

ZZ: OK - now while you were still at Sunnyside High, you met up with Greg

Copeland and Steve Noonan... were they writing songs before you?

JB: Certainly. It was they who started me into writing songs - after that long hiatus during which I was mainly steering clear of music. Steve used to sit on the lawn and play bluegrass tunes - he played banjo guitar and upright bass - and Greg was writing poems and stuff like that. He was in the school's debating society too... and they got together and began to write songs. When I started hanging out with them, I started writing songs myself.

ZZ: Which brings us to the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, and one of the more obscure episodes of your career.

JB: Right. The Dirt Band came from Long Beach and because, as I said earlier, there were only a few worthwhile clubs within striking distance of Orange County, they used to come to the Paradox - where, by this time, I was singing once a week. One of their line-up split to go into the services, and they invited me to join - which I did.

ZZ: When would this have been?

JB: February 1966. I was in the Dirt Band for six months before I left high school, and about a month during the summer.

ZZ: I understand that there was very little correlation between their live act at the time, and their first album, which came out a few months later.

JB: That's right. They were basically a jug band, based fairly closely on the Jim Kweskin Jug Band, who were pioneers of that jug band revival. In fact, a lot of the Dirt Band's repertoire was inspired by or stolen from the Kweskin Band - sort of like modified arrangements of their tunes. They were real crazy guys, but they were a great jug band... had the best version of 'Mourning Blues' you ever heard, with a great double guitar and double harmonica arrangement.

ZZ: So their repertoire had little contemporary material?

JB: Exactly - which is where our approaches differed. We were doing songs like 'Gonna Sit Right Down And Right Myself A Letter' and 'Wild About My Lovin'... and it was a real fun band to be in, unlike a lot of other jug bands who were serious musicologists, but I was much more into my own songs, and so I left (in July 1966). John McEuan replaced me, his brother began to manage them, and within weeks they had a recording contract and weren't a jug band anymore!

ZZ: How do you mean?

JB: Well, Liberty Records wanted them to record contemporary songs - so their style changed overnight almost. They began to do some of Noonan's songs, a couple of my songs, and they began writing their own... they went off in a totally different direction, and it was years before they returned to the kind of folk-based music that they felt most comfortable playing.

ZZ: It wasn't long before they had a huge hit with 'Buy For Me The Rain' (written by Copeland and Noonan), and began to tour the country - did you have any regrets about leaving?

JB: Not really. You see, during the time I was with them, I was sitting around Long Beach listening to jug band records, and though I really liked that music and really liked the guys, I was more interested in my own songs... I thought I just ought to get to Hollywood real quick!



Mr JAMES COPELAND AND ELEKTRA

Billy James is a name which will undoubtedly be familiar to Zigzag readers for his involvement with the Byrds at various times in their erratic flyte. He worked for Columbia Records between May 1961 and September 1966 (for 2½ years in New York, then as Director of West Coast Publicity in Los Angeles), when he left to become West Coast Director Of Elektra Records - responsible for the acquisition and development of talent. As it turned out, his heart lay in management at the time, and he left Elektra after only eight months (during which time he'd signed Steve Noonan and Clear Light to the label) to concentrate on that aspect of the business. His stable of artists included Penny Nichols, The Gentle Soul (with Pamela Pollard) and Jackson Browne.

ZZ: Your first publishing contract was with Nina Music... who were they?

JB: That was Elektra's publishing company Billy James got me a contract with them for songwriting almost as soon as I left the Dirt Band... they signed me in Fall '66.

ZZ: The demo record you made for Elektra has become a collector's item...

JB: I can't think why... it's terrible. I recorded that collection of songs in New York in early 1967. They just sat me down in this studio and said "Sing them all". I cut about 30 songs in three hours, and I think they included some older versions of songs I'd done at Columbia Studios with Billy, a week or so before he left to join Elektra... you see, I did an audition for Columbia, but when Billy left, he took me with him.

ZZ: Were they just bare, raw demos?

JB: Absolutely. I just played a song once, and they guy would shout "OK...next", and I'd sing the next. The guy would say "What's the name of this one", and I'd tell him the title... and at one point he asked me "What's this one?", and I said "It's Funny You Should Ask!". So he said "Come on... we haven't got all night. What's the name of the song?", and I told him "That is the title - 'It's Funny You Should Ask!'".

ZZ: Did you finance your trip to New York from the advance they gave you?

JB: No, the advance went elsewhere, actually. I used it to pay my lawyer's fee when I got busted for marijuana. It was rather fortuitous that I had that little stash of money, because it saved me from having to go to jail. I paid the lawyer to wink at the judge - so that we could all go home and try to write some more songs.



NEW YORK, NICO, AND THE UNDERBELLY

ZZ: The next landmark was your trip to New York, and the much publicised association with Nico. When exactly was that?

JB: January 1967. I went to New York with Greg Copeland - mainly because he was going there. He was trying to get to Europe, and New York was to be his point of departure. Originally, he and a friend of his called Adam (of 'Song For Adam'), a sailor, had gone down to Mexico to find a mythical ten dollar banana boat to Spain. They never found it and came back to LA, where they picked me up, and the three of us drove across the country to New York.

ZZ: You drove?

JB: Yes. We stopped for Chinese food in Amarillo, Texas - and that's literally the only place we got out of the car. We went by Route 66... took us about three days. Having got there, we looked up Steve Noonan, who had already moved out there: he was working with a peace corps/domestic organisation called Vista... he was

teaching in a thing called the Head Start programme. Anyway, we slept on his living room floor for about a month.

ZZ: During which time you got a gig at the Dom, a club owned by Andy Warhol...

JB: He had his name in lights out front, but we didn't see a lot of him. He'd occasionally appear at about 11 o'clock and leave at 11.15.

ZZ: ...and you met the famous German lady there?

JB: To tell the truth, I don't know if Nico was German or not; she was so paranoid about the immigration people at the time, that if you asked her where she was from, she'd just regard you as an infiltrator and leave immediately... but she did have a rather distinctive accent. I was originally hired to be her accompanist, but after a week, the opening act, Tim Buckley, decided to quit - he'd only been getting real drunk and singing Johnny Cash songs anyway... he didn't really like it there. It was he who had recommended me to Nico when she was looking for a back-up guitarist - but he split, and they needed someone to sing. Next thing I knew, I was the opening act as well as the accompanist.

ZZ: I suppose it was just good fortune that you happened to be in New York at the time Nico was cutting her first solo album ('Chelsea Girl').

JB: I guess so. She began work on it during the last week of our engagement at the Dom... and I just accompanied her on the three songs I wrote. Lou Reed was there too; he played on the songs he wrote.

ZZ: Why did she choose to record some of your songs - did she fall in love with them that much?

JB: I guess she didn't have any other ones that she liked better - but I can't tell you how loosely put together that album was. Tom Wilson is obviously a good producer, but he seemed to be on the phone most of the time. I don't think he was too interested in that particular project - he was off on a lark... didn't take it too seriously. Nico didn't like the album much.

ZZ: Did you write those songs specifically for that album?

JB: No, they were written already. I did write a song for Nico subsequently... 'The Birds Of St. Marks', which was the name of the street the Dom was on - St. Marks Avenue.

ZZ: Would you like to confirm or refute a tall story? The guitar you used on 'Chelsea Girl' belonged to John Wiesensthal of the Soft White Underbelly (later Blue Oyster Cult), which he gave you in return for you giving him surfing lessons... any truth in that?

JB: Not a lot! He did teach me to play some guitar, and we did surf together once or twice... but that was about that.

ZZ: Is it right that the Soft White Underbelly were going to be your backing band at one time?

JB: Well, the next year (March '68), Richard Meltzer and Sandy Pearlman, who were, and still are, connected with that group, were going to open a theatre in Greenwich Village called the Anderson Theatre for rock concerts. There was also some connection with Crawdaddy Magazine, for whom they both wrote. Anyway, John had the idea that the Underbelly could do their set and then back me up as my band... but we had very little in common musically, so nothing came of that... in fact, the show never happened. I think they promoted the first of a projected series, and then Bill Graham opened the Fillmore East right across the street - after which the Anderson project was abandoned. I lived in their house for a while in New York, and we had a lot of fun just jamming around, but when it came down to arranging songs... well, it was a good idea, but it didn't work out. It was worth it for the experience and to find out what would happen, because I'd never played with a band before.

ZZ: A lot of people are under the impress-



Tommy Cheyenne

ion that you, Tim Buckley and Steve Noonan were once in the Orange County Three together.

JB: We were, but only in a magazine article (in 'Cheetah'). The author thought it was unusual that three songwriters should have come out of Orange County. In fact it was a really weird article, and nobody, including us, thought it was all that good... he just wound up paraphrasing a lot of my lyrics. Nobody really understood it... people thought we were a group called The Orange County Three, but we never played together in our lives.



THE EARLY COVERS

ZZ: Apart from the Dirt Band and Nico, the earliest cover was by the Allman Brothers' old band Hourglass... did you know Gregg even back in those days?

JB: I was a little closer with Duane, but I knew Gregg too... he was real quiet, but a real wonderful guy. We used to get together sometimes, and they'd tell me about walking around in the south with that long blond hair. I used to sit there with my mouth open, listening to incredible stories about them having to run for their lives in airports! They were really innovative when they came out to LA. I remember seeing them in a club - and they were the first people (along with Doug Sahm) who I ever heard talking about Otis Redding and singing his songs. Gregg would be down on his knees, singing those great Otis songs, and the crowd would go nuts... then after the song Duane would come up to the microphone, all proud, and say "That's my little brother!"

ZZ: Do you keep in touch with him?

JB: Oh yes. He came and played with us

up in Buffalo, where he's studying music. He came by and sang 'These Days' with us.

ZZ: Does this list of pre-Paxton Lodge cover versions look complete?

JB: Let's have a look. Yes - I think that's about it.

Cover Versions: Pre-Paxton Lodge

May 1967 NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND... 'N.G.D.B.' - 'Melissa' & 'Holding' Liberty LST 7501

July 1967 NICO... 'Chelsea Girl' - 'These Days', 'Fairness Of The Seasons' (with Copeland), 'Somewhere There's A Feather' Liberty 2353 025

Nov 1967 NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND... 'Ricochet' - 'It's Raining Here In Long Beach' & 'Shadow Dream Song' Liberty LST 7516.

Jan 1968 HOURGLASS... 'Out Of The Night' - 'Cast Off All My Fears' Liberty 3536.

March 1968 TOM RUSH... 'Circle Game' - 'Shadow Dream Song' Elektra EKS74018

March 1968 STEVE NOONAN... 'Steve Noonan' - 'Shadow Dream Song', 'She's A Flying Thing', 'Tumble Down', 'The Painter' 'Trusting Is A Harder Thing' (with Noonan) Elektra EKS 74017.

May 1968 NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND... 'Rare Junk' - 'These Days' Liberty LST 7540.

Dec 1968 HEDGE & DONNA... 'I' - 'From Silver Lake' Capitol ST 107



UP THE BACKROADS WITH Mr MOHAWK

In Spring 1968, Elektra's maverick A&R man Barry Friedman persuaded the com-

pany president Jac Holzman that a backwoods recording studio away from the distractions of Los Angeles, would produce a never-ending stream of quality hit albums. Thus, in August 1968, the Paxton Lodge experiment was born - with Friedman, now masquerading under the nom de studio of Frazier Mohawk, as the ringmaster.

Jackson Browne was one of the artists signed to Elektra as part of the plan.

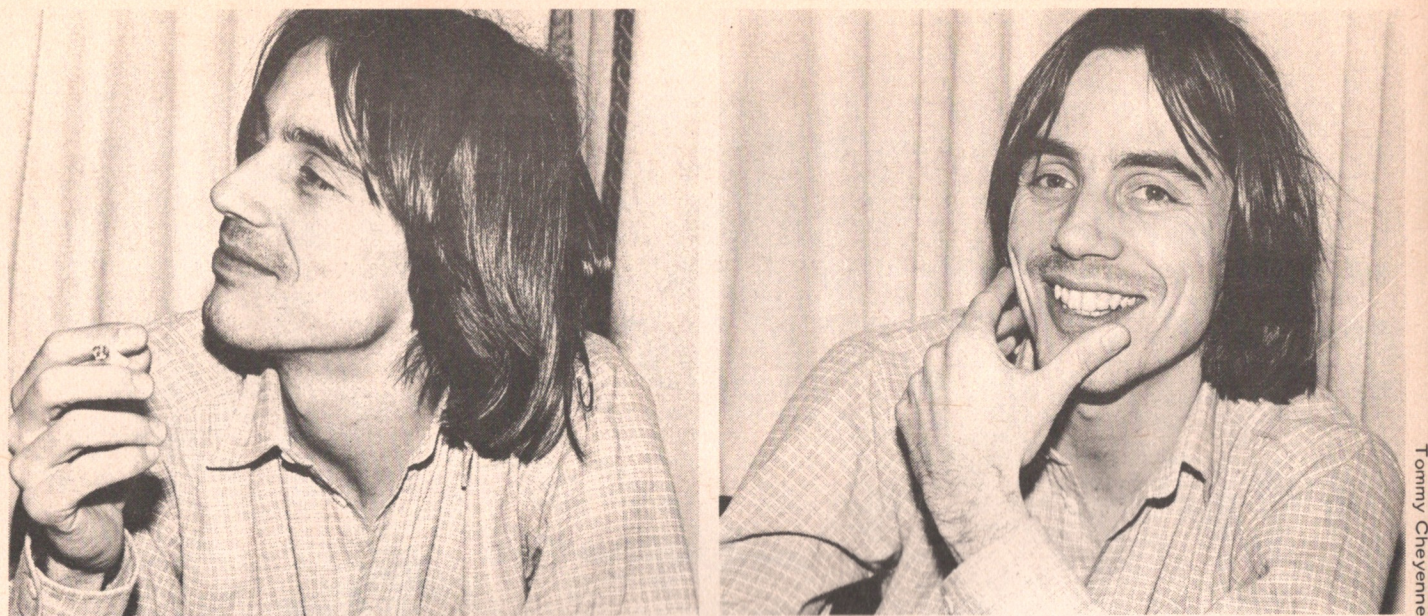
ZZ: Why didn't that basically idyllic situation up at Paxton Lodge work?

JB: I don't know how anyone could have tolerated listening to us talk about what we needed when none of us had actually done anything. How did we know what we wanted? It was just a good summer, and we got carried away with this grand idea to go up to this big house in the mountains and make music - the idea being that we could record without any distractions. The fact of the matter was that when we got there, we thought of anything but recording. It was so beautiful up there... swimming in the river, sitting around in the sunshine getting high, having our girl friends up there to stay... it was amazing! But then it started to snow, and we had to start making records, which is when we ran into big trouble... we just couldn't seem to achieve what we'd set out to do.

ZZ: Why not?

JB: I don't know... things just weren't working out; we were just up there screwing around - not making anything like full use of all the recording facilities. Jac Holzman, who used to refer to the project as 'Operation Brown Rice' and call us his hippies up in the mountains, wasn't too happy with the situation, and after a while he started to send other acts up there... like Spider John Koerner and Willie Murphy, who knocked out a whole album in a week and a half. Then Lonnie Mack came rolling up in a trailer with his organ player, and using our drummer he cut some tracks... until one morning we woke up and he was gone - he'd just split! He didn't like the lifestyle up there, and I don't blame him! Then Dave Ray came up and cut his 'Bambool' album... all this while we were up there floundering around.

ZZ: Who exactly were "we"?



JB: Ned Doheney, Jack Wilce and me. The original idea we had in mind was a sort of repertory company of people who wanted to play with each other – but the distractions overwhelmed the musical impetus, and it simply didn't work. In the end, Elektra tried to salvage the situation by having the three of us make one album between us, whereas we'd each been trying to cut our own. Needless to say, none of us were very happy about this compromise solution, but I cut three songs, just to co-operate and go along with the plan. Predictably the resultant album was the disjointed and unrelated bunch of songs we knew it would be... put together by three people who only knew each other as a result of being cooped up together in this dude ranch for several months.

ZZ: Elektra wanted to pretend you were a group... a sort of Crosby Stills and Nash idea didn't they?

JB: Yes, a group with three singers – and they wanted us to come up with a name, so we called ourselves Baby Browning, after a tombstone we found in the local cemetery... it was a baby's grave in the Brownings' family plot in a nearby town called Quincy. Our first choice for a name was Still Birth, which would have been entirely more appropriate in the circumstances, but they wouldn't go for that. We all thought of it as a still born group – one which would never walk or breathe.

ZZ: What was Frazier Mohawk doing all this time?

JB: He was around. He was an unusual guy – used to be a clown in the circus... he was a real carney. He had some great ideas, but he was... err... he used to go around in a Napoleon hat... he was really crazed. He was a lot of fun to be high with, but he couldn't always pull off what he tried to do.

ZZ: Were you up there long?

JB: Six months – after which I moved back to L.A. Elektra made one last ditch effort to turn the Baby Browning project into a viable album – they decided to bring Jack Nitsche and Ry Cooder in to supervise the re-recording of the songs, with us doing nothing but the vocals... but after a couple of days of discussion, that idea was dropped and the record company said "Well, it looks like a mistake – you guys can go now".

ZZ: Was it an expensive failure? Did Elektra lose an inordinate amount of money?

JB: Not by today's standards, no. It was a lot of money for 1968, though – especially as they weren't able to salvage any of it. Ultimately, the whole thing was pretty embarrassing, and it ended up with everybody running away for a couple of years to try and pull themselves together. I kept away from record companies after that... just started singing around again.

An interesting postscript to this chapter is the fact that of the three participants in the Paxton Lodge disaster, only Jack Wilce ever flew under the Elektra logo. As well as playing on the afore-mentioned Koerner/Murphy album (as John Wilce), he had a 1969 single called 'Apple Pie, Mother, and the Flag' (Elektra EKS 45068). The b-side of this epic was a thing called... wait for it... 'The Ballad of Baby Browning!'. The song fails to mention the group, however, and appears to revolve around the sentiment that "You can never be lucky in life and lucky in love, and expect to be free". Wilce seems to have submerged without trace since this milestone.



**ECHO PARK,
Mr FREY,
Mr SANDERS,
& Mr GEFFEN**

ZZ: How did you run into Glenn Frey?

JB: I saw playing the Troubadour with John David Souther when they were in the Longbranch Pennywhistle, but I'd heard about them before... new kids in town! Just after I met them, the place next to mine became empty, so Glenn moved in... got it for 70 bucks a month. Then I got into difficulties finding my rent each month, so I moved into the apartment below his – for 30 bucks a month. My sister had lived there before me, and her neighbours had been Pamela Pollard and Greg Copeland... and before that, there was this guy called Scottie, who died a few years ago... I wrote 'For A Dancer' for him. After a while, J.D. moved in with Glenn, and Ed Sanders was also staying there whilst he covered the Manson trial.

ZZ: Christ on a bicycle!!... what was that like? In the preface to the book, he intimated that he had some unpleasant experiences while he was doing that, and had to curtail several lines of inquiry for fear of reprisals.

JB: Oh, he had problems all right. A couple of times, Glenn had to throw milk bottles through the window to discourage what Sanders calls "the sleazo inputs", who were after him. A lot of those sickos would like to find him and snuff him, but I don't think anybody knows where he is right now.

ZZ: I know exactly where he is... I saw him several times last year.

JB: Well, I hope he's feeling good, because his head was sure full of that Satanist garbage. I think he was really brave, because he did a lot of investigation that

the police didn't seem to be able to do, and he shed a lot of light on where Manson was coming from.

ZZ: Where was this astonishing little community?

JB: It was a suburb of Los Angeles called Echo Park – a low rent Mexican/American neighbourhood. It's got a lake with ducks on it... and canoes and zip guns in the night.

ZZ: After the nasty taste of the Elektra bungle has dissipated, and you felt brave enough to seek another contract, why did you go to David Geffen?

JB: Well, people told me that he was a guy who cut through all this record company audition crap. He hadn't started Asylum at that time, but I just hoped he could find me a contract somewhere, and a manager too. Held helped a friend of mine called Ezra Mohawk, who'd sung with the Zappa band, and I hoped he could do something to save me the misery of traipsing round to record companies staffed by people who shook hands like a trout and then kept you hanging for weeks because they wouldn't take any responsibility. If Geffen wasn't prepared to help, I had made up my mind to split... though I'd no doubt have wandered back to town after a few months.

ZZ: There's a fanciful story that Geffen threw your letter in his waste bin, and that his secretary fished it out and begged him to give you a whirl because she liked the photograph you sent. Is that bullshit?

JB: No... that story is true! The letter annoyed him apparently and he threw the whole lot in the trash can – but she liked the picture! Then she put the demo record on, and made him listen to it... so he forgave me for the letter, which, as it happens, was really sincere. I guess I must have said the wrong thing, but all I said was that I really admired him and had a lot of respect for him because of the people he represented. He just took exception to it at the time.

ZZ: Who did he represent at the time?

JB: Laura Nyro, Joni Mitchell, and Crosby Stills & Nash.

ZZ: What were the circumstances of your first meeting with him?

JB: I got a message that he'd called, so I called him back, and he said "Why don't you come over right now?" So I drove over, and he was a really nice guy. He liked my songs to the extent that he thrust 300 dollars in my hand and told me to go off, have a nice summer, think about making an album, and not worry about it. Then he started shopping for a big bucks advance deal on publishing which would enable me to start living beyond means as soon as possible!

Peter, Paul and John
Continued next month.

LOUISA ON A HORSE & MISTY MOUNTAIN



John Otway & Wild Willy Barrett
Produced by Pete Townshend of The Who

2094 133



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Now that that most extraordinarily tedious and self-indulgent of rock'n'roll years has finally stumbled to some sort of half-assed conclusion, I am able to look back with satisfaction and genuine pleasure on only a few scattered instances when rock'n'roll tore me away from my boredom and my fantasy world of sun-kissed beaches, never-ending tequila and beautiful señoritas, and made sense to me again. You're probably not the least bit interested, but for two glorious weeks of that dull year, I abused and wasted my time in foreign parts, staring at the ocean and consuming what must have been exceedingly unhealthy quantities of dreadful Spanish beer, and do you know what?...I didn't give a hoot for what was happening in England; the thought of the great gigs I might have been missing meant sweet nothing to me; I didn't miss my daily dose of rock'n'roll one little bit! When I finally arrived home and waded my way through the music papers, the first thing I wanted to do was turn round and go back again!

To be precise, my interest in rock'n'roll music was at its lowest ebb ever last year, and apart from my extended sojourn of convalescence at the lovely Greenacre Mansions just outside Cambridge, it's the main reason why my elegant prose didn't grace these pages all that often. But now, with 1976 mercifully behind us, I can feel the tide about to turn. There is most definitely "something in the air", and it's quite possible that 1977 could be a cracker of a year. And it will be if Graham Parker & The Rumour have anything to do with it.

After all that has been said and written about them, Graham's two immaculate albums remain in a class of their own this year, so far superior to the appalling amount of duff vinyl that gets shoved out as to make them absolutely essential purchases. They also completely justify his obscurity-to-stardom persona, which could otherwise have seemed like another typical record company hype job. You can read about Graham Parker's heroic struggle to elevate himself from the realms of the mundane and into the super-star bracket in a moment, but first a few preliminary facts...

One Sunday lunchtime during the summer of '75, well-known DJ and author Charlie Gillett played a song called 'Between You And Me' by Graham Parker & The Rumour on his Radio London show 'Honky Tonk'. One attentive listener that Sunday was Phonogram A&R man Nigel Grainge, who, having assessed in a flash the vast potential that Graham and his band displayed, immediately contacted Charlie to enquire who and where was Graham Parker and the Rumour.

The reply he received went something along the lines that Graham Parker, besides being an excellent songwriter, had no heavier credentials than the experience of being an ex-petrol pump attendant and from Camberley, and the Rumour were a sort of pub-rock 'Supergroup', consisting of: Brinsley Schwarz - guitar, keyboards and sax; Bob Andrews - keyboards; Stephen Goulding - drums; Andrew Bodnar - bass (the latter two both ex-Bontemps Roulez); and Martin Belmont - guitar (ex-Ducks Deluxe). They were at that time rehearsing and recording in the old studio at the Hope & Anchor, and were being managed, as they still are, by Dave Robinson.

Anyway, Nigel Grainge signed them up, and so far they've had two albums released, plus an 'official' bootleg recorded 'live' at Marble Arch. Despite a somewhat less than effusive review of the first album, 'HOWLIN' WIND', by Mac in ZZ60, they've managed to build up a large and enthusiastic coterie of followers, and mark my words, before next year's too old they're gonna be big BIG. Those of you with memories will, of course, recall that there should have been a proper article on Mr. Parker in the aforementioned ZZ60, but for reasons only known to those fools up in the wilds of Bucks Cpnuty, it didn't come together. I therefore took it squarely upon my own shoulders, via an interview with the man himself, to present you with all the details of Graham Parker's long and varied history...

"My long and varied history!! As far as I can remember I was writing when I was about 12 or 13, and I also had a group called the Deep Cut Three; I was born in London, but grew up in Deep Cut, Camberley. The Deep Cut Three changed to the Black Rockers, and we used to wear black polo neck jumpers and tight, black jeans. I used to write songs and we'd play Beatles' material and stuff - that was about 1963. We used to play in a workingman's club down the road, and in this garage shop on Sundays, when all these little kids would come round and pay threepence to see us and scream at us. Then I suppose I gave it up for a bit to go fishing, but started up again when the electric guitar craze came

in heavily.

"My dad got me an electric guitar, and I formed an R'n'B band - this was in 1965 when I was 15. Again we were doing a few of my own things - I just found it was easy to write, although it was probably nonsense then - but we also did some Stones and Yard-birds things. We were called The Way Out at one point - it was the time of all those freaky names like the Who - and we used to play youthclubs like Bagshot Youthclub, Black Down Youthclub, Camberley, all around the suburbs. I couldn't really give a damn what happened to us, but it was great fun.

"Even then I was well into R'n'B. There was all this 'accepted' Cliff Richard/pop sort of thing still hanging on, and there was R'n'B and blues; and any kid who was any good knew what was happening. Even at school we had a harmonica band where we'd play these R'n'B riffs on the harp...and of course the Stones and the Who were great, because they were in that tradition. That's who we used to dig really, the American R'n'B greats; we were playing very 'black' music, and stangely enough it was much more accepted at that time than it is now.

"And that's about it really - I gave up then. I gave up when I left school...I thought I was supposed to get a job or something, and be sensible. I hadn't been writing much then either. I just gave it up. Actually, at that time when I left school, I was really into dancing and going to discos. I was into soul - Otis Redding and all that. I thought brass instruments were where it was at, so I just stopped playing guitar...and that was it for years.

"After I left school at 17, I had a job for about two years in an Animal Virus Research Institute, breeding animals. I think back on it now, and it just seems like a day. It was of no importance really...it was just a rest period. But I realised it wasn't doing me any good, so I left home and just started trailing around.

"I left home when I was about 19, and I was well into Peter Green by then - he was my idol just after the 'soul boom'. The English blues thing with John Mayall and all those people was coming up, and I used to go along and see Peter Green, and I just couldn't believe it. I remember I used to try and play like him...I still am. But there were millions of other people trying to do it as well, so I realised that it wasn't worth it. I knew I couldn't be a great technical player, because I was too lazy.

"I went to Guernsey, took an acoustic guitar with me, just dosed around, took a load of acid - all the usual shit. I worked in a bakery. I used to go around collecting money from pinball machines as well for this guy who owned a cafe there. I was also sort of learning acoustic guitar - folkie things, because I was well into the Incredible String Band then and other stuff from that era - King Crimson and so on. It was amazing then, because all this music was coming up, and unless you'd taken acid you couldn't understand it. So you felt part of a movement when you knew what they were talking about, but nobody else did. It was just like R'n'B again really...just like finding that.

"I eventually came back to England from Guernsey and then I dosed around - sometimes it seems I went for ages without working. I didn't know what I was doing - sponging off my parents, I suppose. But I did lose my way really heavily about that time. I got this job working on hydraulic presses in a factory where you have this fucking great machine, and you press these buttons, and a strip of metal goes through and it knocks out a disc brake. I was dressed in a boiler suit, a real acid case really, and I didn't know what I was doing. I was cutting my hands to pieces on these bloody things, and I had to get out of it in the end. I had to go to Morocco...I had to go from one extreme to the other.

"I was actually in Morocco for about six months, until I ran out of money, when I went to Gibraltar and joined a band. We were called Narziss...I don't know what that was all about, but I joined them, and I was also playing acoustic guitar solo at the same time; I managed to get on Gibraltar TV, which wasn't very hard. The songs I was doing then were really so strange; they were sort of Incredible String Band acid-anthem things, but they always had this R'n'B flavour which always came through - and that's why it was difficult when I played with this band, because they were all from Gibraltar, and Santana was the big thing - all that flowy Latin stuff. And although I dug it a lot, I was always putting a hard edge into the music, which fucked them up a bit. So, in effect, I started to lead the band. I mean, I just jumped in as a total stranger and they were millionaires' sons y'know - they were real dossers, really rich....they had no money, but they were rich.



"While I was in Gibraltar I was staying in this hotel; they called it the Hotel Continental or something, and it was like six people to a room - bunks. I was working on the docks there in a refrigeration place, unloading all these Birds Eye things from London, or wherever they came from, and taking them to the deep-freeze, and then delivering them around Gibraltar...delivering these frozen chickens and things to shops, which was quite a nice job really, except when you had to go in the freezer, because that was really cold - I had to get some really thick socks for that. Finally this band decided to go to Morocco to do some gigs. So we went there and played a few discos in Tangier...and we stayed in this cheap hotel.

"What they wanted out there, though, was funky music - 'The Funky Chicken' was all the rage - and we were playing 'space rock'; I was leaning more towards rock things. But anyway, we eventually ended up having a big fight with the manager of one of the clubs and all his greasy little Moroccan minions, because he took our passports and said he had to hold onto them. We got paranoid about it and thought he was going to steal them and sell them, so we charged over the bar one day and demanded our passports, and this guy just freaked out and slugged the drummer in the mouth, at which point all these kids picked up chairs and

thought out of desperation "Well, how do you meet people who are good?" I knew there were good musicians who had some kind of feeling for what I was doing, but I didn't know how to meet them. I'd been around the world, pissing around, but I'd never really been into London, although I was born here. And then I thought that maybe all the good musicians were in America, although I didn't particularly want to go to America for some reason.

"Anyway, I put this ad in the paper, and Noel Brown was one of the people who answered it, and he seemed to be the only person with any real süss as to what I was doing. He introduced me to Paul Riley of Chilli Willi & the Red Hot Peppers, and Paul introduced me to Dave Robinson. I did a demo tape with a couple of friends in Camberley, and Noel and Paul and a few other people - 'Back To Schooldays' and a few other songs. Paul then took this tape along to Dave Robinson who said "Bring him along and we'll try something". So I went to the Hope & Anchor, we did some of my songs, Dave liked them, and that was it really."

He cut some demos with Dave Robinson, and that brings us up to the point where 'Between You And Me' was played on 'Honky Tonk' and Graham Parker and the Rumour signed with Phonogram.

"There were a few other companies, I suppose, but there was something about Phonogram that was just right. I had about 15



A windswept and earnest Graham Parker, surrounded by the Rumour: (left to right)...Martin Belmont, Steve Goulding, Bob Andrews, Andrew Bodnar and Brinsley Schwarz.
Photo by Adrian Boot.

started bashing us and there were fists flying...the lot. It was amazing really, because we were all spaced-out peace and love, but we pitched in like anything. We ended up going to the police and told them about it, and they cleared it all up, but that was it. That was Morocco finished.

"That was when I came back to England...I must have been 21, I suppose. I was writing a great deal at that time, and I knew that I had to find a band who could play all this stuff. I met a publisher guy (Stuart Johnson) who had a studio, and I used to go in there and play my songs on the acoustic guitar, sometimes with a few friends - and he would take the songs round to record companies. Nothing really happened - a few people were impressed by the songs but said I had to have a band. The singer/songwriter boom was over, and they weren't signing people up just because they could write songs anymore. So I missed James Taylor, I missed that bit, which is probably fortunate in a way. But I did a publishing deal with Stuart...that's Tower Bridge Music - he's got 'Back To Schooldays'. He's also got a load of my very old stuff which is no good really.

"I also met a slide guitarist named Noel Brown at the same time as I met the publisher. I met Noel through an ad in MM...I just

songs together for 'Howlin' Wind'; it was about Autumn 1975 that I signed the deal, and everything since then has happened extremely quickly. We've toured with Ace, Kokomo, Thin Lizzy, and then another one by ourselves, which was pretty successful, I'd say."

A very important factor behind the mercurial rise to his current status seems to be the thoroughly sensible decision to steer clear of the highly restrictive pub-rock circuit.

"Yeah that's true. I mean I didn't know...to me, playing in a London pub was the biggest thing possible, it was like stardom. But I soon realised that pubs are where people play because they haven't got anywhere else to play, right? And the band were really fed-up with being tagged 'pub rock', so they helped me to realise what direction to go in."

It occurs to me now that I probably haven't made it unmistakably apparent just how good a band the Rumour are. Well they are. The talents of the individual members will, I'm sure, need no analysis, and let's just say that I can't think of or imagine any other band who could handle Graham's songs so perfectly. What's more they're going to record their own album, without Graham, this month.





Adrian Boot

"The Rumour were actually a band in their own right before I met them. They were together and they were wondering what to do about it, because they had a few songs and they were doing a few numbers that Dave Robinson had in mind - cover versions of things. They weren't thinking about going on the road so much, but they were a unit. I met them about July last year, and Dave suggested I should get it together with them. Then I went on holiday to think about it, and at the end of July I came back and said "Yeah, let's give it a try".

I personally find it extremely pleasing to see Brinsley Schwarz and Bob Andrews in particular reaping some sort of reward for their services to rock music over the last seven years. Nick Lowe too. As a producer he's building up the sort of reputation from which legends are made. He produced the first Graham Parker album and one track on the second.

"We were originally going to have this guy called Tim Moore produce the first album - an American singer and writer, he wrote 'Second Avenue' for Art Garfunkel - but he got exhausted on a European tour, so he blew it out at the last minute. So Dave suggested Nick Lowe. I didn't know Nick Lowe, what he could do or what he couldn't do... I hadn't even heard him sing or anything. I hadn't heard the Brinsleys. So I said "Yeah, okay, I've trusted you so far, I'll go along with it". And Nick Lowe was just right. Looking at the two albums, though, I think 'HEAT

TREATMENT' (the second one) is much more open. It's not so basic. I want to make 'total music', so I don't care about sticking to roots or being experimental. That's what good music is to me, really, it leans in lots of ways. I think it will probably come out even more later on. I want it to keep rocking, but I don't want to end up as a parody of myself. That's why I wanted a different producer on the second album (Robert John Lange) and a different studio... a different approach just to keep it healthy".

Well, I'd say that right now things are looking more than healthy. If you are reading this at the beginning of January, when you should be, Graham and the band will be in America where, so my spies tell me, they're threatening to be enormous. 'Heat Treatment' is picking up the massive radio coverage it deserves (it's definitely one of my albums of last year) and, unbelievably, their best is certainly still to come. Not bad for an ex-petrol pump attendant, eh?

(Much mirth) "Well, I was doing that job when I met that publisher for the first time, and I was doing it as a morning job up until I went to the Hope & Anchor. All I wanted was a little job where I could get a few bob in and keep writing in the afternoons. It's funny, because people come up to me and ask me "Did you really do that? Is it true?" And they think it's really great".

Andy Childs



Before we actually get down to concluding this epic (for the time being), I feel obliged to tell you about a few items of extra information which various interested parties have sent concerning the various matters so far raised. This explains, he whispered lamely, why this final episode has taken so long to put together.

Anyway, I am indebted to the following (as Cyril Fletcher says - Esther Rantzen can come round here anytime...) for their contributions: Dave Gordon, Nick Jones, Mike Jessop, Nick Ralph (of Dark Star) and Phil Ward.

Let's start with a few things about Fairport Convention, mostly supplied by Nick Jones (currently press officer for BTM - nice to see Climax in the charts, Nick - and who was the first London correspondent for Rolling Stone), and by Nick Ralph.

NJ remembers introducing Richard Thompson to 'Jack Of Diamonds' in 1964, when they played together in a pre-Convention group, and has a notion that Tyger Hutchings was in an Albion Jug Band as long ago as 1964, i.e. considerably pre-Fairport. Nick was one of four 'notables' who attended William Ellis School in Highgate, the others being Richard Thompson, Gerry Conway and Mike Alfandary the promoter. NR provides a list of songs that Fairport played, but which never made it to released record, although some of them were recorded. With Judy Dyble, he recalls 'Violets Of Dawn' (Eric Andersen), and with Sandy Denny, 'Suzanne', 'Bird On The Wire', 'If You Feel Good, You Know It Can't Be Wrong', 'Gone, Gone, Gone', 'Reno Nevada', 'Shattering Live Experience', 'You're Gonna Need My Help', 'I Still Miss Someone', 'Morning Glory', 'High School Confidential' and 'Light Your Fire' (described as a Christmas spoof). Much of this is apparently in Island's vaults, so how about it, chaps?

The more observant among you may have noticed mention here and there of a cassette of early Fairport, which I'm assured by those who've heard it contains a lot of this very same material, and is highly recommended...

Also according to NR, Ian did play with the Fairports for over a year after he left the group, including at a police benefit concert at Little Hadham, which Mr. Ralph claims to be able to authenticate by 'documentary evidence'.

On to the Southern Comfort days. Mike Jessop tells us that Martin Jenkins lives in Coventry, did two LPs on Rubber with Hedgehog Pie, and is at this point reforming Dando Shaft, while the famed Higgy, roadie to MSC, has subsequently worked with Uriah Heep, and is now Andy Fairweather Low's tour manager. Amazing what you can find out... Both Nick Jones and Phil Ward have seen Poli Palmer at the Golden Lion in Fulham recently, while Phil Ward thinks I should have known that Ray Duffy is now drumming with Gallagher and Lyle, before which he was in Cottonwood and a band called Chinook, in which the afore-mentioned Mr. Ward was the bass player. All sorts of famous people write to us - thanks, Phil.

Finally, the prolix Nick Ralph indicates that Plainsong's first recording was of the fabulous 'Along Comes Mary', of Association fame, but that it was never released, although Marc Ellington dubbed his own vocal on the Plainsong back-track, and put it on his 'Restoration' LP, while a couple of the other tracks that were recorded for the 'Gospel Oak' LP, but didn't make it to the record, were 'Galveston' and 'Turn Your Radio On'. To all you gentlemen, thanks for your efforts, and treat this as your reply.

Back to the story - with Plainsong crumbling, Elektra weren't too happy, and the same went for Ian. "I made my displeasure with the band known to the record company, and Ian Ralfini (then head of WEA UK, now head of Anchor) put me in touch with Jac Holzman, who invited me to New York to talk about it. Jac wanted me to leave the band and do a solo thing, and he suggested that I do it with Nesmith. I knew about Nesmith from Bud Scoppa, who was at



GOIN' BACK WITH IAN MATTHEWS



Mercury, so it sounded great!"

Packing his bags, Ian went to LA where he got involved with the Countryside vibe, staying with Skip Van Leeuwen, the general manager of Countryside, who was also American motorcycling champion, and according to everyone I've spoken to, an ace cat. Nesmith was apparently impressed by Skip's ability to sell things, having bought some motor cycle accessories from him. Just so you know who we're talking about, there should be a picture hereabouts of an almost unrecognisable Nesmith (presumably hung up on hair restorer at the time) with Skip and a mutual interest.

"Michael's an unconscious con man - he doesn't mean to do it, but he's a dreamer, an idealist, with the best intentions in the world. And that's what Skip saw - it was 'Here's a record company, we can sign who we want, and we're going to make a million!' So Skip left".

Having established that he would be

making an album with Nesmith for Elektra, it came down to details. "When we first spoke, he said he wanted to put me straight on exactly what he was going to do. He said that the service he really wanted to perform was to make things available to me, things that he had access to, and I didn't. So I told him the people I wanted to use, like Jimmy Gordon, and when I got back to California (after briefly returning to England) he told me he couldn't get any of them! But he said he had a real good studio band of his own... so I said 'OK'. He never does anything maliciously".

The album which resulted from this momentous alliance was 'Valley Hill', which is simply a magnificent record, and quite essential. It was also the first of Ian's albums where he contributed instrumentally, although with the wealth of magical players in the Countryside band, he's not significantly audible. For the uninitiated, the band consisted of Nesmith on guitar, the great Orville J. Rhodes on steel and dobro, Danny Lane on drums (now with the one-time Mrs. Phyllis Nesmith in private life), who contributed to the latest Bert Jansch LP, and also helped out Ralph McTell on the road, Billy Graham (no, not him) on bass and fiddle, two amazing guitar players in Jay Lacy and Bob Warford, the latter acclaimed by Clarence White as the best player of Clarence's string-bender, and David Barry on keyboards. A great band, need I say, and also to be heard on the Countryside LPs by Garland Frady and Red Rhodes.

The musicians, then, were excellent, but the songs are maybe even better. As an interpretive album, this has few equals. It starts with two Plainsong remnants, 'Keep On Sailing' and 'The Old Man At The Mill', the latter of which I consider to be the only blot on an otherwise near perfect escutcheon, because it's drab and boring, with little to commend it to me. 'Keep On Sailing', on the other hand, is great, with a beautifully layered backing complementing a finely recorded and appealing vocal. 'Shady Lies' is a song from the pen of Richard Thompson. It's not very old. He wrote it when he was with the Albion Country Band. Richard used to call Sandy's album 'The North Sea Gasman and the Raver'. But I heard him do that song on a gig, and said 'I'd like to record it, and he wrote it down for me'.

Next comes what I consider to be Jackson Browne's best song, obviously a mighty diamond among a positive hoard of precious stones, 'These Days'. Ian claims to have been one of the earlier of the dozens of people who've recorded it, only being preceded by the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Tom Rush and Gator Creek, and in a subsequent discussion of Tom Rush, Ian said that 'No Regrets' is constantly on his short list to record, and he reckons he'll eventually do it, which is something to look forward to indeed. 'These Days' is followed by another Matthews song, this time not a previously recorded effort, called 'Leaving Alone', which apart from its inherent excellence, also has some good use of the string-bender from Bob Warford.

Side two starts with the brilliant 'Seven Bridges Road', written by Steve Young, and apparently recorded on both of Young's first two LPs. (The first of these was called 'Rock Salt and Nails', and I gather that the fine Mr. Rod Buckle at Sonet has acquired a Steve Young album, from the Blue Canyon label, which should be in the shops by now, and is heavily recommended. Frame reckons that Steve Young was in a group called Stone Country with Don Beck, who visited Europe as a member of the Burrito Revue, the main part of which was Country Gazette.) Then there's 'Save Your Sorrows', another ex-Plainsong, a Randy Newman thing called 'What Are You Waiting For', which could only have been written by the man who did write it, 'Propinquity' by Nesmith, which is nearly as good here as in the original, and finally 'Blue Blue Day' by the great and underrated Don Gibson. "It was one of my favourites, and everybody had done it too fast. I wanted to show it the way it was, like Neil Young did with 'Oh Lonesome Me'".

Don Gibson remains a remarkable song-



Michael Nesmith (then President of Countryside Records) and Countryside marketing director Skip Van Leeuwen with the factory-sponsored Yamaha 360 which they co-rode in the BAJA 500, a high speed endurance race, in Mexico on June 7th 1973, (Van Leeuwen, former American Motorcycle Assn. Champion TT racer, won over 500 professional races in 13 years).

writer, as the few people who bother to listen to him are well aware - he has maybe twenty great songs which have never been covered in the rock field, and surely following the example of Neil Young and Ian isn't a bad thing... Finally, let's just note that Ian doesn't consider the album to be even among the best four he's done. I, and probably a lot of other people, would beg to differ.

'Valley Hi' was the extent of the collaboration between Ian and Michael Nesmith. "I think we both felt it wasn't necessary to do anything more together, that we'd done what we'd set out to do". It's worth noting that there would have been no pressures from Elektra for the liaison to continue, as one of David Geffen's first moves when he took over Elektra was to effectively wind up Nesmith's Countryside label. He also wasn't wild about Ian's talents (or mine actually, although that's another story), and is obviously a man capable of extremes of taste... the last thing to tell about 'Valley Hi' is that the American sleeve, in my opinion at least, is superior to its English equivalent, in that the lyrics can be read with 100% more ease, and the colours are less primary.

So the romance between Elektra and Ian was drawing to a close. But before it did, another fine album resulted, 'Some Days You Eat The Bear... And Some Days The Bear Eats You', the completion of which is 'and some days we both go hungry!'. This time, Ian got himself back into production, no doubt assisted by his trusty engineer, the famed Fritz Richmond (of Jim Kewskin fame), and again displayed excellent taste in his choice of both songs and backup musicians. Taking the musicians first, the rhythm section for the major part of the record is Willie Leacock on drums and David Dickey on bass, who do a similar job for America, with whom Ian

toured in 1973, and where he met Leacock and Dickey. My Holmesian mind had wondered whether David Dickey was some kind of pseudonym for Dave Richards (Andy Roberts is still credited for 'Keep On Sailing'), but I was absolutely wrong. On several tracks, Jeff Baxter contributes, and where Ian can't recall where he met the skunk, I fancy it might have been in Red's Royal ("where you get it royally!"), Red Rhodes' music shop in Van Nuys, where Baxter mends guitars for Red, apparently because he likes doing it. Then Michael Fonfara and Danny Weiss, both from Rhinoceros and recent Lou Reed orchestras, both of whom were friendly with Fritz Richmond. Keyboardist Fonfara is still with Loulou on his 'Rock and Roll Heart' album, but Weiss seems to have fallen by the wayside. The legendary Steve Gillette, writer, you'll recall, of 'Darcy Farrow', is also involved on several tracks.

"Ever since I did that song, I've always wanted to meet him, and in 1970, I met him in LA. He left a message in my hotel when I checked in, and I've been friends with him ever since".

Then there's Joel Tepp, who is actually the only one of these people who remains with Ian, at least as far as we know. Ian says that Joel played with Bonnie Raitt (although not on record), and also for Rod Taylor - according to the sleeve of the Asylum LP by Taylor, Tepp did a lot for him, and on the evidence of 'The Bear', Tepp is a grade one harp player. (From the trivia store, you might be interested in an album called 'Buffalo Nickel Jugband' on the Happy Tiger label, which the famed Bert got for me. Tepp was apparently a member of that band, whose album is a light-hearted skiffle type effort. I like it, but I suspect it's pure stupidity to recommend it to people who have to buy their records.) The Countryside band, or at

least several of them, make cameo appearances, as does David Lindley, who Ian met through John Ware. Ware, Lindley and Chris Darrow all used to live in Claremont, a little place some distance from LA, where Guy Carawan also lives.

Enough of the trivia, and to the songs. 'OI! 55' by Tom Waits starts the record, done in a style closer to the Eagles' version than Waits' own. Ian thinks he may also do another Waits song called 'Rosie' in the future. He also has another Danny Whitten song up his sleeve, in addition to 'I Don't Wanna Talk About It', which is great here. The other one has apparently not been recorded, and it's called 'Oh Boy!'. 'A Wailing Goodbye' is the only one of the four Matthews songs which doesn't also appear on the unreleased Plainsong LP, the others being 'Home', 'Keep On Sailing' (again) and 'The Fault'. All but the last mentioned are very good in my estimation, with Tepp's harp on 'A Wailing Goodbye' and Tepp and Baxter's duetting on 'Home' particularly pleasing.

Gene Clark's 'I Tried So Hard' from the Gosdin Bros./Early LA Sessions LP(s) is predictably fine, and 'Dirty Work' from 'Can't Buy A Thrill' is also nicely done, with Al Garth, who was over here with Poco last year, very nice on alto sax. 'Do I Still Figure In Your Life' by Pete Dello is also a song of enormous quality - Dello was in Honeybus, and later made a solo album on the short lived Nepentha label. In fact I swapped Dello's album and a Hotlegs cassette for Shiloh and Longbranch Pennywhistle with Ian. I think I probably got the better of the deal. Finally, there's a return to the Jesse Winchester songbook with 'Bliss', on which Lindley plays like a king, and where Ian produces his usual sympathetic reading of Winchester's songs. It's altogether another very good record.

At this point, I asked Ian to put the albums we'd discussed in order of preference, and this is the way it came out. 1. 'The Bear' 2. 'Plainsong' 3. 'Thro' My Eyes' 4. 'Later That Same Year' 5. 'What We Did On Our Holidays' 6. 'Valley Hi' 7. 'Second Spring' 8. 'Tigers' 9. 'Gospel Oak' 10. 'First Fairport Last equal - first Matthews Southern Comfort and unreleased Plainsong. I think that's interesting anyway...

After the release of 'The Bear', and before recording again, Ian went out with a band under the name Ian Matthews and Another Fine Mess, which consisted of Joel Tepp, John Ware on drums, Don Whaley on bass, Tommy Nunes on guitar, and Ian himself on electric guitar and vocals. Nunes was once in a band called Sarah, which also included Kenny Hinkle, later of California Music with Bruce Johnston and Terry Melcher, and Bill House, also later in the Equinox stable. Ware you should all know about, and Whaley seems to have been in a band on Epic called Honk, who had a couple of import only LPs out two or three years ago.

That was just about the end of the first mammoth interview, but just pre last (75) Christmas, Ian came back to London with news of his new deal, which we all know now was with CBS. "I got as far as drawing up contracts with Arista, but then Clive (Davis) started doing his A&R thing, wanting to direct me in a direction I didn't want. I was presenting songs, and between him and the other guy in A&R, they were pretty much all being turned down, so it just became impossible. Then I decided to wait for my Elektra contract to run out, because Geffen wanted a lot of money to let me go. That ran out in August '75, and I made some demos, and started looking around. It was funny, because I cut three songs, one of my own and two by other people. When the Berritos made 'Flying Again', they wanted one more song for the album - they were looking for a single. Lionel Conway (Ian's publisher) suggested that I send a song of mine 'Lonely Hunter', to Norbert Putnam, to see if they wanted to do it. Norbert sent back word that they didn't, but offered to produce me, so it worked out really well".

It's not my intention to reiterate my lengthy review of the resultant album 'Go For Broke', which appeared in ZZ61, so it should suffice to add a little information which isn't on the sleeve. The album had two titles suggested before the one under which it eventually emerged, the first being 'A Legend In His Own Mind', and the second 'Gopher Broke'. On all the tracks but 'Brown Eyed Girl', the basic band was Joel Tepp, Steve Wood on keyboards, Don Whaley on bass and Tris Imboden on drums (all three ex-Honk), plus Jay Lacy on guitar. The other track was done by the Nashville cats whose names are on the sleeve, and which you already know.

The theory was to put together a ten piece band to promote the album, but it seems that didn't happen. The latest line up we've been able to find is Lacy, Whaley, Bobby Wright (keyboards), Bobby Hooks (sax) and Steve Guidotti (drums), plus probably Joel Tepp, but since that info last May, I haven't heard from Ian. The only relevant item to mention is that Don Whaley and Tris Imboden appear on the very promising 'La Seine' LP, which you should check out forthwith.

And that, believe it or not, is the end of another Tobler marathon. Your views on in-depth features of this length seem to be divided between appreciation (thank you) and ill-disguised contempt (mutual)... but if anyone has any constructive comment to make on their reasons for enjoying or loathing these long pieces, I'd be interested to know. Finally, my thanks to everyone who has been involved in this epic, with particular reference to Montgomery Smith, and of course Ian. Until the next Cecil B. de Tobler production, happy new year.

John, Nicky, Lizzie, Jane, Tiny Dancer, Spoonful, Dingbat, Cash, Carry and the fast dwindling chickens.



Tommy Cheyenne

Yes, it's that inebriated irrepressible bundle of cuddly fun, our very own Spluttering Diatribist John Walters - seen here in triumphant pose as he stands before the Greek Street Sauna Baths Ladies Wrestling Team (they only challenge ladies), which he successfully led to unprecedented honours during 1976. Left to right: Gavin, Nicky, Timmy, Willie, Johnny boy himself (the darling of the massage room), Dangerous Danny and Obie (the referee). None of this has the slightest bearing on Mr. Walters' latest eloquent waxings which he has chosen to entitle:

Like Trousers...

Well, I've seen them... on your behalf and to satisfy my curiosity, I've seen them. Who? Why the team that brought you such hits as 'Only Yesterday', 'Yesterday Once More', 'Rainy Days & Mondays', and 'I Keep On Thinking It's Wednesday'. Mr. and Mrs. Showbusiness. No, not Tony Hatch and Jackie Trent, although I have seen them. No... the Carpenters. Alright so they're not married, so they're brother and sister, but what does it matter? Nobody's implying any jiggery pokery, of course. How could they when the image is that of those Disney animals with wide eyes, big ears and no sexual organs?

Actually, I expect Karen is just about as brazen and strapping a flashing-eyed, raven-haired wench as one could wish to accompany one on a tour of the stews of Eastcheap for a night of strumpeting, thigh slapping, foul oaths, and the quaffing of butts of sack to the tune of sackbuts. In fact I'm sure that under that plastic exterior she's probably a right minx. Still, the exterior does imply that she missed her real showbiz chance by being too young to star in films called things like 'Surfin' - Beach - Skiffle - YaYa - Rumble Party', and to leap out of a car (stationary of course) saying "Uh uh Eddie, petting is strictly off-limits".

I didn't catch them when they first came over, but remembering the sighs of relief breathed by the music biz folk who wished that rock had never happened, and the talk of musicianship and a return to standards (paralleled only by the reaction to other saviours of 'real' popular entertainment like the Osmonds and the Cowsills - remember them?), I approached the Palladium with some trepidation.

You can always get a pretty good idea of the kind of night you're in for by having a quick squint round the audience beforehand. Being the opening night there were a fair number of celebrity guests and complimentary ticket holders about, usually from the New Faces/Eurovision end of the business spectrum, rather than the Roundhouse/Sniffin' Glue extremity; but as I charged, rhinolike, bar-wards, it was Mr. and Miss Average who provided the chill of anticipation.

The place seemed to be full of couples who had come in from somewhere like St. Albans, probably as a foursome, in the Cortina that he gets the use of because of his job. I reckon that I have bought a suit for every five years of my life, but we are

dealing here with the sort of young chap who buys about five suits every year. She took off one of the half days that was still owed her out of this year's holiday, and spent the afternoon having her hair done at Madame Sylvia's, and looks like an advertisement for Miss Selfridge. She will spend quite a lot of time before marriage telling him not to do that as it's not nice, and a lot of time after having headaches. You can say what you like, but I didn't feel that I was in for an evening of the raw outcry of an oppressed people.

When the curtain went up it was obvious that they had owned up about her drumming along with the band, and were going to feature Richard as bandleader and her out front. The band is comprised of young sessionmen augmented by skilful use of a tape machine which is quite blatantly used to make things sound more like the records, and in a bit of hokum involving members of the audience singing along and having the embarrassment of hearing themselves played back. They went through their large repertoire of hits, and after a dozen or so bars the audience caught on to what they were playing and applauded dutifully. At this point Karen had an interesting trick of bowing from the eyes. Without interrupting the song, she managed to smile and slowly close her eyelids. Try it in front of a mirror. It implies quiet appreciative modesty.

They varied the hits with bits of 'business', partly to give variety to the show, and partly to let Karen into the wings where she could do a quick change before emerging in another off-white outfit almost identical to the last one. Whether this was to emphasise the blandness of the music or not, I am unable to say.

For their departure from million-selling modesty, they did one of those fast wash-board, motorhorn and starting pistol routines which were popularised by Spike Jones and used to be done on 'Worker's Playtime' by Albert and Les Ward. Then came the inevitable rock/nostalgia spot where styles of yesteryear were presented in what is referred to as an 'affectionate parody'. This meant that he comes on on a motorbike, and she with a ponytail and a sweater which has been filled with a pair of mammoth false mammaries. Well, they would be, wouldn't they?

They then lowered a screen on which were projected old photos, and gave us their potted histories as an excuse for

showing us what they could do. I happen to be the sort of person who, when shown photographs of young children, goes "Ugh!" but luckily a Palladium audience goes "aah!"

There was a lot of talk about early music lessons, and how they found that Karen could DRUM!! ping ping pong, ping ping ti pong, digga digga, digga digga, basshh!! Various assortments of percussion were rushed on, and Karen set off round the stage like the climax to one of those old Gene Krupa films, where in order to save the Centre for Deprived Kids, he has to fulfil a club session, but finds that the villain (who wants the Centre for a multi-storey car-park) has destroyed his drum kit. So he has to go round the club playing on tables, cutlery, light fittings and waiters, until the club has miraculously filled with ageing colonels, who smile and tap their feet before presenting him with an open cheque. In Karen's case, she didn't lose the beat or anything, but the regular drummer discreetly played along with her.

Then Karen announced that at this point in his life Richard had discovered "grown up music". What could this be? After all, most major jazz figures are grown up enough to be dead, and Presley won't see forty again. A mirror was lowered, reflecting Richard's hands on the keyboard, a curtain was raised revealing an orchestra, and he launched into 'Warsaw Concerto'!

They must have seen me coming in, because not content with that, their obligatory encore provided me with one of those golden moments of showbiz kitsch that make it all worthwhile. Richard sat at the keyboard and began to play and sing a ballad version of 'Coming Through The Rye'. ("Not my idea of an ender", I thought. "Hardly 'The Saints' or 'My Way' or 'Caravan' with a drum solo!") Then she came on singing a schmaltzy ballad version of 'Good Vibrations' at the same time! The climax came when she got to:

"Ever lassie, has a laddie,
None they say have I,
Yet he's giving me good vibrations,
I'm picking up excitations,
Coming through the Rye!"

I know I got it right, because I wrote it on the back of my hand in case I forgot. After this the house lights went up, whereupon everyone stopped applauding and filed out with the minimum of pogo dancing.

Still, you can find the whole affair slightly laughable, but you can't really knock it. They're obviously incredibly successful with their own audience, very 'professional' as they say, and she sings in tune.

But what more can be said of Linda Ronstadt? (Spoons full of egg yolk crash to breakfast tables in Zigzag reading homes all over the country. "Ma'am, ma'am, come quick, it's the master...he's gone purple and he's just sort of, staring". "Give me the smelling salts, Maisie, and phone for Dr. Farnaby - and tell him to hurry!" - fade up Archers signature tune.) I mean I just can't see what you ZZ people see in her. She just seems to sum up what I was saying last month about women in rock so often being competent talents who look good in the photographs. I have tried. On a recent weekend at 'Chaverings', my country seat, I went out to the West Wing, into the stack, wheeled the ladder into the REDDI to SEDAK room, took out my Ronstadts, and listened to them.

Feeling that all might not yet have been revealed, I went beyond the call of duty and watched her on the Old Grey Whistle Test. Amiable and competent chick with the obligatory good looks - a bit spotty on close-ups, though. Still eager to give a buxom be-jeaned beauty a fair crack of the whip (Stop sniggering at the back!), I also attended one of her London concerts. Same thing. It's nice to hear some pleasant songs sung finger-lickin' style, (I don't want to mention the sniggering again!), but she ain't no Tammy Wynette or Dolly Parton, who manage to gloss even the 'Drunks Dead Dogs and Divorcees' end of their repertoires with an integrity and a sincerity that passeth all understanding.

It's not that I think that she isn't pleas-

ant to listen to, it's just that it's being widely put about that she's an artist... whereas I feel that she's simply a good craftsman. Singing other people's songs very well is by no means a dishonourable tradition; there were many ladies on the old Light Programme lunchtime pop shows who, accompanied by Joe Loss or Ray McVay, did nothing else - but I don't expect to open Zigzag and read Part 3 of 'The Rose Brennan Story'.

Talking of Zigzag... as I stride every morning into Zigzag House, I wave my tightly rolled broly to the girls in the mail-sorting department, where the response to my first article is still being sifted. They nudge each other and smile, and Tilly, the junior, looks down at her plimsolls and goes positively pink. So far, the mail has been one hundred per cent in my favour, although it has been pointed out that Neil Ardley means well, and is a jolly nice chap. That may be so, but it's been my observation that very often, in music as in boxing, nice guys come last. However, there seems to be some confusion over my assessment of punk rock. I know we're all sick to death of reading about it, but as several people congratulated me on putting it down, I think that, although my opinion seems to be clear enough to me after re-reading my first two articles, I had better briefly redefine my position.

Unlike many people whose opinions have been recently published, I have actually seen some of the British groups under the punk umbrella. As a bloke who is now 25 going on 38 with an ear for a good tune, I would consider that the current breed of punks had failed if I was instantly turned on by the music. Some rock writers and critics claim to be so, but I am too aware of the simplistic dogma, the reactivating of styles that I heard a long time ago, and techniques bordering on an inability to play. Thus, I can write what I hope is an amusing middle-aged-outsider-looking-in account of the events.

However, I do remember the popularisation of skiffle, trad, rock, free jazz and so on, and the superior snidings of the "They can't even play their instruments" type. May I make it clear then that I don't want to give up a lot of my time to listening either to punk or symphonic rock; but I am sick and tired of pompous, even-older-than-me critics putting down the Damned in favour of something like 'Olias of Sunhillow', when the first have the kind of energy and crude excitement that made rock worthwhile, while the second expresses ideas equal in naivety with the punks, but wraps them up in a load of pompous, your-hundred-best-tunes, pseudo-modern twiddle dee. And don't tell me that British punk isn't real punk because it's not much like The Seeds or Shadows of Knight. What's in a name? You Zigzaggers are never happier than when pushing something kicking and screaming into a pigeon hole; and anyway, British punk has become like British skiffle music - such a style of its own as to be virtually unrecognisable when compared to the original.

Things have got quite ridiculous. I even heard someone seriously blaming the Bill Haley riot on Sex Pistols fans! So let's have no more silly letters. The girls here have quite enough to do at this time of year, what with getting the Christmas decorations down, shouting under the Gents door to see if Frame's alright, and walking Tobler round and round the block in an effort to sober him up before his wife gets here.

Still, one thing about the Sex Pistols, (Groan): When they sing about anarchy, something happens and people get excited, take sides. The same could not be said about another new group that advocates, if not revolution, then at least social change: Red Brass.

I had received quite a few glowing notices and encouraging phone calls from the leader, so I trotted down to the 100 Club for a listen. In a recent 'Sniffin' Glue', a member of the Clash said "Like trousers, like brain". When

I read it out, the listener who laughed with most derision had trousers exactly like his brain, so I took it to be a punk extension of my theory, expounded earlier, that you can get a good idea of the gig by looking at the audience.

The crowd here gave a pretty good clue. Plenty of beards, anoraks and denims, roll-neck sweaters, and so on. In other words the uniform of a certain type, based around North London, who were at college in the middle sixties, and were concerned with leftist politics and jazz. Their womenfolk were socially aware and had studied, but now taught some art school spin-off like Contemporary Mop Design in a comprehensive. Was I reading too much into their trousers? I felt not when the band started. It wasn't bad, but it had that earnest dullness which the Jazz Scene seems unable to shake off. The band is a medium big band with two girl singers and a third girl doubling flute and voice. There were some nice bits on alto and tenor, and Mark Charig can always be relied upon on cornet, but I must say that the general effect was of a goodish college big band, augmented with a few good outsiders, playing selections from the new rock opera by Dave Spart.

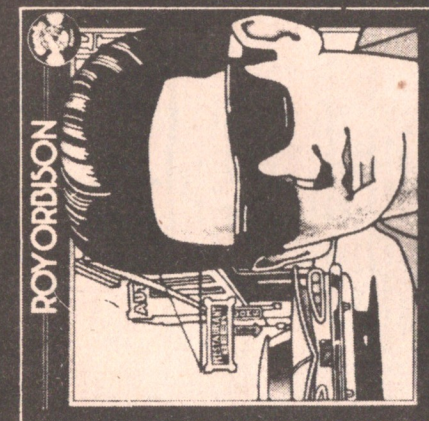
There were stirring songs about the value of the pound, the corrupt nature of the ad-man's world, the futility of the life of a woman chained to the sink, and similar revelations guaranteed to change the life of the listener; but it didn't seem to provoke the audience of extra-mural pottery teachers into mounting the barricades.

I didn't hear the second set, which I'm told was livelier, but there was one decent song called, I think, 'Faces', though the best one could say was that it sounded like the sort of song which saves a Tim Rice/Andrew Lloyd-Webber musical. No chums, I'm afraid it's like drawing perfectly respectable apples, and then colouring them orange and blue. Form must be married to content - military music for a war, and revolutionary music for a revolution.

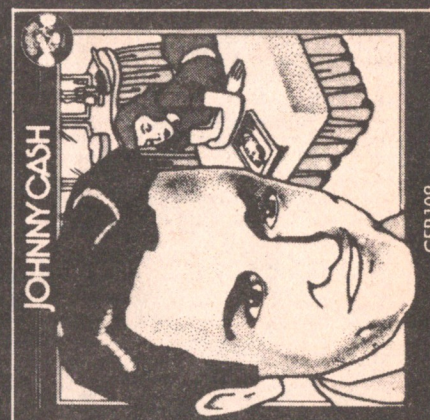
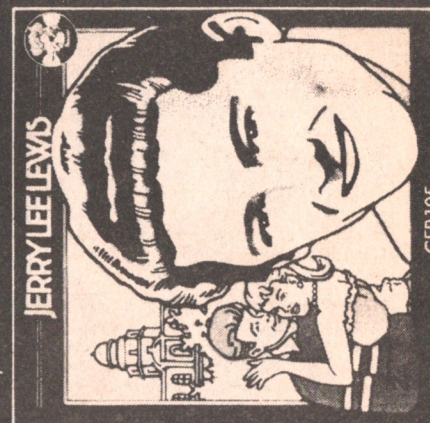
The trousers/brain theory came very much into its own at the Cliff Richard concert at the Fairfield Halls in Croydon. Cliff would also like to change the world, but his audience look as likely to do so as do the Red Brass followers. The show was OK - sort of Butlins MOR so-so - but if you ever wondered where all those people went who used to clap on the beat on Juke Box Jury... well, they're filling up Cliff Richard concerts. They really come into their own on 'The Day I Met Marie' when, like one man (an S.S. man, actually) they clap through the chorus on all beats. At the interval they clutch their Babychams and walk hand in hand onto the terrace... he in his "But does this job carry an adequate pension" trousers, and she in her Belgian coney-style lapin fur coat, and gaze at the moon. Or where the moon would be if the Croydon skyscrapers could be moved.

I don't knock everything I see, but I think I'm lucky if I catch something every month worth praising. This time, as in other months in other years, it's been Loudon Wainwright III. John Peel first introduced me to his work on an import album, and then I recorded him when he came to London and several times subsequently. We expect our poet/guitarists to have mystical overtones and to at least imply various levels of meaning, but I'm happy that Loudon is simply direct, muscular, witty, skilful, and lays his meaning on the line. I caught him in concert and at Jeff Griffin's Radio One live show. I am now going to look under the stairs for a photo of Loudon and myself which I think is there. If I don't find it, I'll find an excuse to print it when I do. (Ed: Since it failed to arrive, I assume this photograph to be no more than a figment of his glue-fuelled imagination).

Little known facts about John Peel No. 3: Not only did he cheat in order to become a marksman while doing National Service, but he supplemented his earnings by taking in ironing.



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SANTANA

Caught Between the Longing For Love and the Struggle For Legal Tender

Santana are some 90 minutes into the last concert of their European tour at Hammer-smith Odeon, and Carlos gently picks out the familiar opening notes to his best-loved number, 'Samba Pa Ti'. Eyes closed and head tilted back in concentration, he gives a fine, intense rendition of the tune; and the wall-stretching crowd goes predictably ape-shit, acknowledging one of rock's most distinctive stylists.

As the applause dies away, the whole band promptly launches into one of the songs from the new 'Festival' album, a piece of simplistic riffing topped with utterly witless sloganeering called 'Let The Music Set You Free!... a ghastly clinker which is all the more depressing when compared to the heights that Santana are still capable of touching.

Carlos - who is dressed all in white, by the way, which he doesn't always do these days - then steps forward, bows deeply, and gives a little speech about oneness between group and audience, introducing a moment of mysticism which seems completely at odds with the two hours of carnival atmosphere that has preceded it.

It's all a little confusing, and at times not a little embarrassing; but I have a strong suspicion that I'm not the only one who's a bit confused: The boy from Mexico, who moved to the hubbub of San Francisco in the mid sixties, and became the figure-head of one of the world's most remarkable and successful bands, before going off at an abrupt tangent into spirituality and jazz rock directions, has finally come back to earth after four years with his head somewhere up above the clouds.

What he's found, on looking around him, is a huge international audience for his group, but an audience which is fairly firmly split between 'Soul Sacrifice' and 'Welcome!... and hardly ever the twain shall meet.

Those who love the early, very physical Santana had trouble relating to Carlos' move to spacier, Jazzier music and odd time signatures; while the people who only picked up on Santana after 'Caravanserai' aren't likely to be impressed by dance music. What can a poor boy do? On the evidence of 'Festival' and the recent concerts, Carlos' answer at the moment seems to be an uneasy compromise, trying to cover all bases at once and please everybody simultaneously. Admittedly he and his band still make some fine music in the process, but the sense of logical progression and coherence that the early Santana and the 'New Santana Band' of 1972/1973 had, is sadly lacking.

The beginnings of Santana were a far cry indeed from white suits, meditation, and talk of love, devotion and surrender. Carlos spent his formative years scuffling round Tijuana and the Mission District of San Francisco, absorbing various influences - many from outside his own ethnic group - and immersing himself in the atmosphere that was in the air as San

Francisco moved towards the summer of love. In fact, Carlos' first encounter with Bill Graham, who was soon to become very involved with Santana's music and career, came when the great man caught him sneaking in through the window of the men's room at the Fillmore West, harmonica in back pocket... a pretty typical street kid.

Santana's early music, too, was a far cry from either John Coltrane or Tito Puente. The Santana Blues Band they called themselves in '67, which is pretty much what they were, and the move to the Latin/rock fusion which brought them 'overnight' success two years later was prompted, not so much by Carlos, as by two percussionists. First of all, a gentleman called Marcus Malone, who introduced an Afro influence to the band before being incarcerated in mid '69 on a manslaughter rap; and secondly, his successor, Jose Chepito Areas, the diminutive Nicaraguan who taught the band, especially young Mike Shrieve who had just joined too, about Latin rhythms.

In a way, that seems to have set something of a precedent, because at every turn, the direction of Santana's music has been instigated, not so much by the man who gives the group his name, as by the people who happen to be exerting the strongest influence on his thinking at any particular time.

Ndugu Leon Chanler, who drummed with the band for two years up to July '76, once said that Carlos himself hasn't changed his personal style of playing in eight years, but instead alters the group's sound by surrounding himself with different combinations of musicians. Now that makes the whole deal sound far more cynical and calculating than it probably is, and it certainly underestimates Carlos' personal musical growth through the years; nevertheless, the basic suggestion that Carlos has relied considerably on his cohorts for inspiration and guidance is not, I feel, without foundation.

The early band, who shot to fame and fortune in the wake of their astounding appearance in the 'Woodstock' movie, was, by all accounts, a very democratic set-up. "It definitely was a democratic band", says Gregg Rolie, who played keyboards and did most of the singing in that original group, "and suddenly he (Carlos) wanted to change it, because someone got in his ear and told him he was the leader, and by no means was that the case".

That "someone" was veteran percussionist Coke Escovedo, who was drafted into the band during 1971 when Chepito was ill. He, of course, denies being instrumental in the group's break-up; but no-one disputes that for a hired sideman he exerted a lot of pressure, both personally and musically. It was he, for example, who decided to use horns on the third album, despite opposition from other members; and he seems to have become quite close to Carlos, who was already getting dis-

enchanted with the dope'n'dames lifestyle and the way Santana's music was headed:

"Musically, the other people didn't really want to go where I wanted to go... I wanted to experiment more with music, and they wanted to grind the same old things over and over. Some of the people wanted to play straight-ahead rock'n'roll, and I wanted to play... I don't know what. I just wanted to search".

So the Old Santana Band, as they came to be known, went down the dust-pipe in a dirty flurry of personality clashes, drug busts, legal proceedings and vituperation, leaving Carlos with righthand man Michael Shrieve and a brand new raison d'etre:

"Larry Coryell stayed over at my house twice, and he went upstairs and he meditated in his room, and he had a picture of Sri Chinmoy, and I must confess, the first time I saw it I was really afraid of it... Larry showed me Sri Chinmoy, and he showed me where he was coming from, where he was channeling his music. He taught me, not through words or anything, but just through being himself. He'd stay at the house, and him fighting himself so he wouldn't eat certain foods, he wouldn't think certain thoughts... and I feel that I started to realise that everybody imitates everybody. So why not imitate the Master; and I started reading more about Jesus, and about Paramahansa, which is - they're all windows for us to see the Light which is God, and when you imitate those divine people, then it's just a way of you becoming... like a tree, you know. You grow straight to the sun instead of growing crooked and going back to the earth".

To Carlos it was a case of seeing the Light, but to some of the other people in the Santana organisation at the time, he was merely "getting weird". Neal Schon, who had joined Santana as second guitarist at the age of 16 and is now in Journey with Gregg Rolie, obviously doesn't remember it as a particularly enlightening, tranquil period.

"Santana were breaking up left and right. David was gone, Mike Caraballo was gone, there were all kinds of new members, and that's the way the sound started to change. It wasn't really Santana any longer, and Carlos wanted to take a particular direction and direct it, whereas everybody had different opinions about which way it should go. So as we didn't agree with him, we had to go. What happened was Michael Shrieve and Carlos really paired off, and we were the enemy. It was like that... Carlos and Michael wanted to produce the album... they didn't want anybody else to do it".

'Caravanserai', the album to which Neal refers, was put together over a period of several months by some fifteen musicians under the direction of Carlos and Michael, and although various people from both Old, New and outside contributed material, presumably much of the credit for the fire and flow of its magnificent music must go



Possibly the most well known Santana line-up (number 3). Left to right (or right to left, depending on which way up it is): Neal Schon; Michael Shrieve; David Brown; Carlos Santana; Gregg Rolie; Jose Chepito Areas; Mike Caraballo.

to the Dynamic Duo. A peak among peaks, is 'Caravanserai', and when the band that emerged from the sessions toured Europe in the last months of '72 they more than lived up to its promise.

Tom Coster was one of the new members of the band, having joined just in time to contribute to one number on 'Caravanserai'.

"I went down to rehearsal, and I was really impressed by what the band was doing, because they weren't doing exactly the kind of music that they'd been doing years back. When I heard what the band was into... it was pretty difficult music, with two keyboards... it was very powerful music.

"When I came into the band it was like a whole new thing. Carlos told me that he wanted keyboard players that were more competent, more into the jazz/rock fusion. At that time it appeared to me that he and Michael Shrieve were the strong motivating forces in that band, and they were very much into the jazz/rock thing; and the first thing that I got hit with was that they wanted me to learn to play like Larry Young and Chick Corea and Keith Jarrett... they were really into that kind of music, and the early band couldn't play that kind of music - it was above them. I thought what the New Santana Band did in 1972/1973 was pretty earth-shaking, musically. The reviews we got from all over the world were astounding... not from a commercial perspective, but a musical perspective".

That band stayed together for just over a year, recording 'Welcome' and 'Lotus', the latter a triple album recorded live in Japan. Both see the band travelling swiftly down their chosen road. 'Welcome' veers from ethereal Alice Coltrane keyboard piece, through devotional songs like 'Yours Is The Light', to the speed-of-light cosmic guitar interplay of 'Flame Sky' where Carlos is joined by soul-brother John McLaughlin. 'Lotus', on the other hand, plays like one continuous two hour piece, 95% instrumental, with brief snatches of familiar tunes like 'I Taboo' and 'Oye Como Va' providing landmarks and launching pads for further soaring voyages into uncharted territory.

Both albums are a little patchy compared with 'Caravanserai', but both also have

many magic moments. Interestingly enough, though, Carlos has at various times said that a) 'Welcome' was a very special album. "I really wanted to do something that would get me respected, to show other musicians what I could do, and there's things in there that I can see any other musician eye to eye with - musicians like Miles, whose judgement I respect"... and b) that he backed off a bit around that time, because of a sudden crisis of confidence in his own technical ability - a fact reflected in the low profile he keeps on much of 'Welcome', after his prominent role on 'Caravanserai'.

The desire for acceptance in the upper echelons of the 'progressive' jazz world was manifested not only in the music Santana played and the people they invited to help them make it, but also in Carlos' activities outside the group, notably with John McLaughlin and Alice Coltrane. With McLaughlin he recorded the 'Love Devotion and Surrender' album in '73 and then toured the States with him; while the following year he teamed up with Alice Coltrane to make the very spacey, spiritual (and soporific) 'Illuminations'.

By Christmas of '73, the Santana band's reputation and critical reception, both on record and on stage, was almost unparalleled at the time; but at the peak of their acclaim, they broke up after another European tour (see Family Tree for details), leaving Carlos and Shrieve still at the helm with Tom Coster as first mate, but once again looking for a new crew.

"The band sounded great for a while", Tom recalls, "But there were strong personal problems, bad attitudes, drugs - Carlos had legitimate reasons to change".

The early months of '74 were spent recording 'Borboletta' in a similar state of fluctuation to the one in which 'Caravanserai' had been made two years previous. When it was released, however, it got a mixed reaction from the pundits, which was a bit surprising, because although there are a couple of pretty dull bits - notably a horrible ballad called 'One With The Sun' - and the vocals sound uncomfortable for the most part (a problem that Santana have been wrestling with ever since Gregg Rolie left), it's a strong album. The instrumental sequence on the

second side concluded by the sublime 'Promise Of A Fisherman', particularly, is vintage Santana music.

Nevertheless, 'Borboletta' continued the downward trend that Santana's commercial fortunes had taken ever since the third album, and whereas the first three albums had sold in their millions, 'Borboletta' apparently struggled to achieve gold status. Ironically, it was far overshadowed by the release of a 'Greatest Hits' compilation and the re-release of 'Samba Pa Ti', which gave the band their first hit single in the UK.

Equally significant for the band's future, perhaps, was the departure in August '74 of Michael Shrieve, who had played a major part in Santana's shift from the streets to the spheres.

Tom: Michael had been contemplating going out on his own for quite some time, and just as we were about to go on a tour of the States, he got very ill with gallstones, or something, and we were either going to have to get another drummer or cancel the tour. While Michael was lying in hospital with a little time to think, he decided it was an opportune time for him to leave and get his own thing together... which at that time was Automatic Man".

Carlos: Michael left because I felt he and I had stopped growing towards the same direction... not because of the direction, but because he couldn't come to terms with what we were doing. Basically I think he needed to find out for himself about so many things... which is OK.

Shrieve left Automatic Man recently, by the way, (which must have delighted Island, who've sunk a small fortune into the band), and is currently working with Stomu Yamashta and Stevie Winwood in the wake of the 'Go' project.

His replacement was the afore-mentioned Ndugu Leon Chanler; a formidable drummer, as anyone who saw Santana when they toured here in autumn '75 will testify, but also the latest in the line of forceful personalities to pass through the group. By the time he left last summer, Santana was 50% black friends of Ndugu... with almost inevitable consequences, as Carlos explains:

"It's like anything... if you get four

Englishmen, four Mexicans, or four Japanese, then you're going to sound English or Mexican or Japanese. If you get a lot of black guys, you're gonna sound really groovy - like Earth Wind & Fire or the Ohio Players. I didn't want to sound like that, I wanted to sound like... whatever we sound like".

Over a year elapsed between 'Borboletta' and 'Amigos' - the longest ever gap between Santana albums, and when the band, now down to six men, went into the studio in November '75, they completed the recording in what was, for Santana, a very short time - under two months.

'Amigos' was something of a change, to say the least. It's...err...funkier; vocals are far more prominent, and the guitar less so - which is unfortunate, because singing and lyrics have never been Santana's forte, whereas glistening instrumental work has; and they employ an outside producer for the first time since 'Abraxas'... David Robinson, who had done the abortive recordings with them in early 1969, but whose more recent experience had been with artists like the Pointer Sisters and the new, more soulful (more successful), Herbie Hancock.

"It's like Muhammed Ali needs Angelo Dundee", says Carlos, who's a great one for off-beat analogies. "When you go in the studio, you get caught up, and you get so involved that it's better to have someone from the outside. David Robinson is one of the best producers around, because he can read, he knows the board, and he's a good psychologist... if someone's feeling weird or frustrated, he can bring the whole band together".

He then went on to discuss the suggestion that the disco-funk leanings of 'Amigos' were a strange sort of progression from 'Welcome' and 'Borboletta'.

"All the albums I've done, I've done with the perception in mind that that's what I wanted to do; but when we did 'Amigos', I realised that I hadn't really kept in touch with the radio, with commercial music... with simplicity, with now music. I was

listening to old albums by Miles, or Coltrane, or Mahavishnu, so I really didn't know what people wanted to hear. But now I know what people want to hear... they want sincerity and joy, period. They don't care whether it's old or new, traditional, polkas... as long as it has joy and sincerity".

By the time 'Amigos' was recorded, Carlos had reunited with Bill Graham, who had managed the band during their mercurial rise in 1969, before being ousted in favour of Stan Marcum. Graham is a fervent aficionado of Latin music, and has never made any secret of it.

"What it is", he's on record as saying, "is an earthy street music when it really gets up-tempo. You want to move and it's physical. I like dancing together, and Latin music... part of Latin music for me always was I would hold a woman, and I would touch her body, and we would sweat, and it's all of that... very sensual, very sensuous".

With that in mind, there's perhaps some credibility in the rumour that when Bill became involved with Santana more closely once again, he was increasingly less enthusiastic about the funkier, blacker direction that Ndugu and his mates were giving the band, and was hoping to see Santana recapture the powerful blend of Latin and rock rhythms that they had pioneered seven years earlier.

Whatever the exact course of events and the precise motivation behind them, Santana went through a whole lot more changes during last summer, and emerged with a line-up of predominantly Latin musicians, and the 'Festival' album, which contains hints of just about everything Santana has ever done, but which owes most to the percussive atmosphere of their first two albums.

As I said, the group's stage performances (at least, the two I saw) were pretty impressive; but I think that owed more to the fact that they were based round strong renditions of the 'Abraxas' album, from which they did almost every number, rather than to the quality of the material from

'Amigos' and 'Festival', which made up the rest of their repertoire.

Most of the critics, who were unanimous in their praise of Santana's 'middle period' explorations, are almost equally in concord about the return to a street carnival. They hate it... and the general consensus of opinion seems to be that it's a direction dictated by commercial expediency rather than creative impulse.

If this is the case then it's been justified, because 'Amigos' was the most successful Santana album since the third one, and the ecstatic packed houses on their last tour suggest that 'Festival' will match it.

I don't think the motivation is quite as callous as that, though. While they were over here, I spent some time talking with Carlos, in his Bournemouth hotel room, and Tom Coster, in a laundromat and an Italian restaurant with a proprietor whose demeanour was even greasier than his food (look out for it if you're down there, it was very funny... he reminded me of Larry Grayson).

Anyway, much of the conversation revolved round Santana's current styles and the thinking behind it, because I'd been aghast at 'Amigos' and was anxious to be reassured that it was only a temporary aberration. Well, I wasn't entirely reassured, but both Tom and Carlos were agreeably frank, and although they differed, their perspectives on the band's current situation were mutually complementary; so here - in concentrated form - is what they had to say.

Tom: Basically speaking, Carlos was pretty pleased with his new direction when he went in to it, but when he came full circle, he realised that where his heart is, is where he is now - playing for the people. We've noticed that the happiness we receive as band members is an extraction of what we get fed back from the audience. We play a set, and from the beginning of the set we try to escalate, so that at the end the energy is high. We get a good response and we are fulfilled, because we've given the audience what we



The latest Santana line-up (number 9), photographed during their recent tour. Left to right: Raul Rekow; Graham Lear; Luther Rabb; Jose Chepito Areas (suffering from indigestion); his Devadipship; Pablo Tellez; and ex-Maltese pimp Tom Coster.

think they want to hear.

If there are certain tunes in the set that people will listen to, but don't really get off on, then we will put in a tune that we think will get more response. For example, we really like 'Light Of Life' and 'When I Look Into Your Eyes', and we'll play those tunes, but the energy that has been built up dies down in those tunes.

With those earlier albums... maybe I liked them, Carlos liked them, Michael Shrieve liked them, you liked them... but the majority of people who liked Santana did not. The reason we're all here is because all those people love the Santana band and for us to kick them in the face and say "Well, we've made it now, let's just give you what we think you need"... that's not right. We want those kids to get up. We feel good when they dig it and show it by dancing to it. That's what it's all about in this band. Whether it'll change this week or next week, I don't know, but we owe the kids the respect of giving them a good show and what we think they would like to hear from the band. What we're doing now is closer, I think, to what they expect from us than what we were doing two years ago. I think a lot of bands have a very dishonest way of forgetting why they're famous, and forgetting who put them on the charts."

Tom also spoke about the band's apparently autocratic set-up, wherein Carlos is the undisputed boss, and everyone else is a salaried employee - including Tom, who's been an integral part of the band for four years now - to be hired and fired at will.

"In almost every case, nobody gets fired from the band directly... they mostly retire themselves because of negative situations to which the idea of the band is opposed. Carlos is the band leader - he's a very fair band leader, he knows what he wants, and he's successful. If we have people in the band whose attitudes go against what the band is trying to do, then those people either have to change their ways or leave. It's not that they have to lower themselves as musicians or human beings, it's just that when you walk into an organisation that's a household name, you can't come in and try to change it... that's not fair to the band, and it's not fair to the public. I don't care how great the band is, how great the vocalist is... what the record company is interested in, and what the world is interested in, is Carlos Santana. That is all there is to it. When you have good management, when you have people like Bill Graham or myself who've been with the band for years and know what's good for the band and what the public wants... you've got to work in that direction."

Direction, curiously enough, is something that Santana at this moment seem - to me - to be unsure of; so I was hoping that Carlos would be able to provide some elucidation of where the band was heading, and why he had apparently done a 180° volte-face since three years ago, when he was saying things like: "I think everyone is becoming aware that when a musician plays for people he only reaches certain people, but when he plays for the Supreme he embraces everybody".

Carlos: It depends on how people see spirituality. I used to make the mistake of seeing spiritual music as music that they play in church, or classical music, or Indian music, and that's not true... there's a lot of spiritual music on the street. If you play from your heart, it has spirituality, whether it's rock'n'roll... no matter what it is. As long as you offer what you have to God and the people at the time you're doing it. To me right now tomorrow I may change like everybody else - but right now the highest form of spirituality for me is joy, and if there's no joy, if it all has to be solemn and your eyes up towards the sky... you can keep it.

You see, those things like wearing white clothes and keeping my hair short, all those things are like forms of discipline. When you first play the guitar, you practice your scales and chords every day, so that when you play you have more command over your instrument. Now that I've been through those spiritual disciplines I have a little more assurance of who I am, and I can get a little loose with it now. Like I told you, I made a lot of mistakes, trying to cram things down people's throats... I don't do that anymore. It's an unhealthy thing, but it's not intentional, it's just that you get so excited with your new inspiration. I learned from that period when I was with Mahavishnu, and I've incorporated it into my music, but what we're doing now is making a very serious effort to simplify it so people can understand it. You can play music for people, man, or you can play music for musicians; and when you play music for musicians, a lot of people admire it and start yelling how fantastic it is, but eventually they fall asleep.

I like earthy music. I like music that has a lot of emotion, a lot of tears, a lot of joy. Some day perhaps I will totally embrace celestial music, but right now it puts me to sleep... right now my appetite is satisfied more when I can see people's eyes, and their bodies move, and there's a big smile on their face.

The real ambition is the power of Love. A lot of musicians don't know about it, because when they go out there on stage, they don't give no joy to people. When people work hard washing dishes, or whatever they do, to get a ticket to go to a concert,

and when they go see someone who's acting stupid - throwing flames through their mouths, wearing make-up, and all that stuff - they're not receiving anything. That's like a circus, like an elephant standing on its hind legs. That's forced entertainment, and that's not what music's supposed to be. It's supposed to uplift, transform, give strength and joy... all those things; but the main thing is joy... making an audience get up and dance.

'Caravanserai' taps another side of me, but the soul manifests itself through different parts of the body. 'Caravanserai' was strictly music for the heart, but what about the other parts of the body? (Taps arms and legs). The music we're making now makes everything happy. I find the same spirituality in songs like 'Samba Pa Ti' and 'Europa'... I guess that they're schmalzy, but at the same time they are very sweet. It has the same feeling that Mahavishnu and I had when we were playing together, but just on a different level.

The thing about those albums with the New Santana Band is I was not trying to make consciously commercial music; what I was trying to do was to branch out in new directions. When I was in the studio I wasn't worried about being successful from a commercial point of view but a musical point of view... though Clive Davis told me 'Caravanserai' would not be a commercial success. To me, 'Festival' has the best of all the albums, plus a new fire and a new energy. I wouldn't say it's a new direction... it's just the best of all the directions I've taken. On other albums I like some songs better than others, but on this one I like them all".

So what is one to make of it? At the time of the interview, I got the impression that Carlos was still unsure how the new line-up (which had only been together for ten days before coming to Europe) was going to shape up, and that all his talk was trying to convince himself as much as me. Six weeks later, though, the band had grown together enormously, and although I'm still staggered by 'Festival' or the tunes thereon, the band is playing the early Santana material so well that there must be hope of a major improvement when they go into the studio again as a fully-fledged working unit. They might not recapture the glorious innovation of 'Caravanserai', but at least they might emulate the tasteful, controlled aggression of 'Abraxas'. But then again... when I spoke briefly with Carlos after the gig, he was asking about Miles Davis' current activities and saying "That's real music" in respectful tones. Like the man said (or rather, sang): "Above all else confusion reigns, And though I ask no one explains".

Paul Kendall

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"DON'T CALL US PSYCHEDELIC"

The biggest new group of 1967 look like being the Move, whose debut disc 'Night Of Fear' has shot straight into this week's chart only days after hitting the shops.

"The record is about a guy who takes a stale dose of LSD and has a bad trip", says their manager Tony Secunda. "It's a nightmare. The flip 'The Disturbance', is about madness – a guy out of his head, who ends up shouting 'Mother!' and things".

The Move, however, deny that their music has any connection with the wave of "psychedelia" which is currently sweeping out of the underground scene. "It's NOT psychedelic" they insist, "...it's 1967 Good Time Music".

In a matter of only weeks, the Birmingham based Move have moved into the big time with a vengeance, smashing anything which happened to get in their way... and I mean "smashing". Almost every move they've made has been accompanied by a deluge of publicity... like the night they brought down the house at Stourbridge Town Hall – with an axe! (The proprietor was, quite understandably, unimpressed). Or their appearance on Ready Steady Go, when they wanted a three foot midget to erupt from inside Bev Bevan's bass drum. ("They refused on the grounds that it was in bad taste", comments a peeved Bev.)

"We don't care about the critics, and we don't care about personal property" says manager Secunda. "We feel our job is to put on a show – an exciting production

SAY MOVE



The Move—L. to R.: Trevor Burton, Bev Bevan, Roy Wood, Carl Wayne, and at the front Chris Kefford

which matches the mood of the music".

"Singer Carl Wayne chops up television sets on stage as a gesture against the one-eyed monster which has the adult population glued to their chairs for hour after boring hour. We've chopped up old cars, simply because we can prove that a glossy car is still only a lump of scrap metal if you

hammer it enough".

"We use carefully timed thunderflashes to accentuate parts of the music – and a new development is sticking Brillo pads on the flashes to get a symbolic spray of sparks. We've chopped up stages, and done fair old damage – but it's alright: if a management gets stroppy, we just tell 'em we'll send some planks of wood through the post".

At a recent Move date, the venue was visited by both the fire brigade, as a result of the group's smoke bombs, and the police, who were searching for drugs.

"The number of times I've been accused of taking drugs", says weary Roy Wood, the group's lead guitarist and songwriter. "Because of the coverage given to it by the press, the average reader by now automatically associates drugs with pop stars. It's ridiculous. I think the newspapers have caused more teenagers to start taking drugs than any of the groups. The whole thing has been blown up out of all proportion".

"This record is only the start: we're going to have a string of hits so long that you won't be able to count them"... and the outrage?

"Sure we set out to be outrageous – and we've been drawing the customers", says Secunda. "It was all planned: create your demand first, and then cash in on it. It's not a mamby-pamby business – you've got to be tough, and make the best of what you can do".

THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

New Singles:

- 'Let's Spend The Night Together' Rolling Stones
- 'So You Want To Be A Rock'n'Roll Star' The Byrds
- 'I Who Have Nothing' Terry Knight & The Pack
- 'Summer Of Last Year' Ian Matthews & Pyramid
- 198.6' The Bystanders
- 'Use Your Imagination' One In A Million
- 'Good Thing' Paul Revere
- 'Matthew and Son' Cat Stevens
- 'The Beat Goes On' Sonny & Cher
- 'I'm A Man' Spencer Davis Group

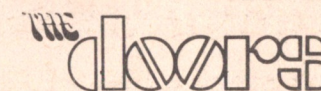
'I Had Too Much To Dream'

The Electric Prunes
Gene Clark
Oscar

Pick Of The New Albums:

- 'The Doors' The Doors
- 'Da Capo' Love
- 'Projections' Blues Project
- 'Mixed Bag' Richie Havens
- 'Face To Face' The Kinks
- 'Hums' Lovin' Spoonful
- 'Between The Buttons' Rolling Stones
- 'Cass John Michelle and Denny' Mamas & Papas

TRACK OF THE MONTH



Back-Pager interviewer Paul Williams speaks to producer Paul Rothchild about 'The End' – one of the great tracks on the debut album by a new LA-based group called The Doors... released this month on Elektra Records.

Williams: How was it, recording 'The End'?

Rothchild: It was beautiful, it was one of the most beautiful moments I've ever had in a recording studio, that half hour when 'The End' was recorded. I was emotionally wrong. Usually as a producer you sit there listening for all the things that are right and all the things that are about to go wrong. You're following every instrument simultaneously, you're following the feeling, the mood all the way through. In this take, I was completely, I was absolutely audience. I had done my job, there was nothing for me actually to do once the machines were rolling. I had made sure the sounds were right on each instrument; you know, when we did our set-up, Bruce the engineer had been cued by me on everything I wanted to do, and at the beginning of the take I was sitting there – producer – listening to take. Midway through I was no longer producer, I was just completely sucked up into it, and when we recorded it the studio was completely darkened; the only lights visible were a candle burning in the recording studio right next to Jim Morrison, whose back was to the control room, singing into his microphone... and the lights on the v.u. meters in the control room. All the other lights were off.

PW: What studio?



• TOM BAKER '77 •

PR: Sunset Sound Recorders, which I feel to be the best studio in the country right now, mainly because of Bruce Botnick, who's 23 years old and one of the grooviest engineers I can conceive of, extraordinarily creative and very pleasant to work with. Ah, and Jim... it was a magic moment... Jim was doing 'The End', he was just doing it for all time, and I was pulled off, right down his road; he said "come with me", and I did. It was almost a shock when the song was over, you know when Robbie Krieger plays those last little tinkling notes on the guitar. It felt like, yea, you know, like yes, it's the end, that's the end, it cannot go any further, that's the statement. I felt emotionally washed.

There were four other people in the control room at that time, when the take was over and we realised the tape was still going. Bruce, the engineer, was completely sucked along into it, and instead of sitting there to attention the way producers are wont to do, his head was on the console and he was just... immersed. Just absolutely immersed in the take. And he'd done it all, and he'd made all the moves right, because Bruce and I had established a kind of rapport, he knew where I wanted things done and when, and when his work was done he did exactly the same thing... involuntarily, without volition, he didn't know he was going to do it, but he became audience too. So the muse did visit the studio that time. And all of us were audience, there was nothing left, the machines knew what to do, I guess. It was all right.

PW: Jim recorded it on acid?

PR: No, not that one. The night before... we tried the night before, we attempted the night before to record 'The End', and we couldn't get it. Jim couldn't do it, though he wanted desperately to do it... his entire being was screaming!

Now I'm sure that clinically Jim was still on an acid trip, but it was done on the after period, the lucid... I guess it isn't the lucid, the clear light period, it's the reflective period of an acid trip. But I have tried several times to record artists on acid, and it doesn't work. At least, it doesn't work for me, I have never seen it work in a studio. I have never spoken to a producer who has tried it who has been successful.

PW: Obviously, the most interesting question is how did 'The End' come to be; also how much of it had been like that before, and how much just suddenly blossomed in those two nights.

PR: Let's put it this way. The frame, the structure of the song was set in everyone's mind, everyone knew what had to be done. Ray Manzarek knew what he was going to play, not the notes, but where and why it had to be; Robbie knew where and why; John Densmore - a brilliant drummer. 'The End' proved that. In my book that's some of the greatest drumming I've ever heard in my life, irrespective of the fact that I'm involved with this album. It's incredible drumming... has an instinct for when. During a very quiet part he'll just come in with three drum shots that are about as loud as you can hit a drum, and they're right, they're absolutely right! Now, you can't plan those things.

Jim, of course, in the recesses of his creative self knew exactly what the song had to be. It went through several permutations in the studio. He'd reach into his back pocket and pull out a sheaf of miscellaneous scraps of paper that had little notes on them, little lines of poetry, and he'd look at them, crumple them up and throw them away and sing different lines during the tune. Lines I'd heard him sing in a club. Other times he'd just riff something I'd never heard before, some of which appears on the record. The version you hear on the record is, I think, a finalised form, it's almost exactly the way they perform it on stage now. It's one of those rare things when a piece of material is caught at the peak of its maturity in a recording studio, extremely rare. The usual situation is that it was recorded too soon or too late, more frequently it was recorded too late. There's a kind of leth-

argy you hear in a lot of recorded performances that is the result of a piece of music not being caught at its prime, but its old age. When everybody has things down pat and there isn't the enthusiasm of creativity.

PW: On interpreting 'The End', I considered for the first time the other day, that the lines "This is the end, my only friend" and particularly the lines "It hurts to set you free but you'll never bother me..." at that point, when I heard that, it occurred to me that the song was about a murder, and not just a guy leaving a girl. I didn't decide that, but the possibilities opened up that the whole thing was the murderer's mind and, ah, the stream of consciousness starting from and leading back to...

PR: It's interesting that you say that, because Jim is fascinated with the concept not only of physical death, this is my interpretation, we never really discussed it, he's interested in spiritual deaths, conceptual deaths, more than physical deaths actually; you'll find this theme in many of his songs, uh, the line in the song "The end of nights we tried to die..."

PW: That goes right back to 'Crystal Ship'.

PR: Exactly, uh, I'm not sure if this is what Jim had in mind, but it's almost as if Jim is saying... realise this is my interpretation and not Jim's, 'cause I've never asked Jim, he presented it to me and said "It's for your head, interpret it as you will"... Jim's saying, almost as a friend, Okay, my friend and I take an acid trip, and then I say to my friend "This is the end my friend, my only friend, the end of laughter and soft lies, the end of nights we tried to die", ah... the line "The end of nights we tried to die", to my mind, is a direct reference to the concept that most psychedelics are a form of physical poisoning; that chemicals are a means of reorientating the body through a kind of poison.



MONKEE MANIA
SWEEPS BRITAIN

It seems as if the phenomenal American success of the television series supergroup The Monkees is about to be repeated in Britain. Their new single 'I'm A Believer', which has topped the US charts for 7 weeks and is the biggest seller since the Beatles' 'I Want To Hold Your Hand', has shot straight into the British chart - spurred by the TV shows which BBC1 have been screening at peak viewing hour each Saturday for the last three weeks. (The first programme was broadcast on 31st December 1966).

Their first album is scheduled for rush release, and there is talk of a British tour with the Troggs. The BackPager will keep you informed of Monkee developments as they happen.

TRIBES GATHER IN SAN FRANCISCO Last weekend (Saturday January 14th), an estimated 25 000 people assembled in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park for an event known variously as The Gathering Of The Tribes and a Human Be-In. From every direction they streamed through the city and into the park, arrayed in wildly colourful costumes - carrying flowers and banners, singing and laughing, and just smiling. Men and women, teenagers, little children, and hundreds of dogs - all admiring and digging each other and mainly just Being Together.

The Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, and dozens of other San Francisco rock bands played between speeches by the Berkeley activists (led by Jerry Rubin), the psychedelic devotees (led by Timothy Leary), and anyone with a word of love or radicalism who wanted to use the microphone.

For the authorities, it was an intense shock to see such a huge throng; for the organisers it was the natural culmination of weeks of preparation. Handbills announcing the event had been dripping with Love and Peace vibes: "In Unity we shall shower the country with waves of ecstasy and purification. Fear will be washed away; ignorance will be exposed to sunlight; profits and empire will lie drying on deserted beaches; violence will be submerged and

transmuted into rhythm and dancing; racism will be purified by the salt of forgiveness" and so on. Whether or not their aims will be achieved, the effect on the city's (and indeed the nation's) press was shattering.

It was a strangely wonderful afternoon, a chance to dig the strength of the growing love generation, and to forget individual rebellions in a sharing of mutual love.

The city, particularly the Haight Ashbury district, seems to have become the Mecca of the hippie/flower power/love generation. Where else could it happen?

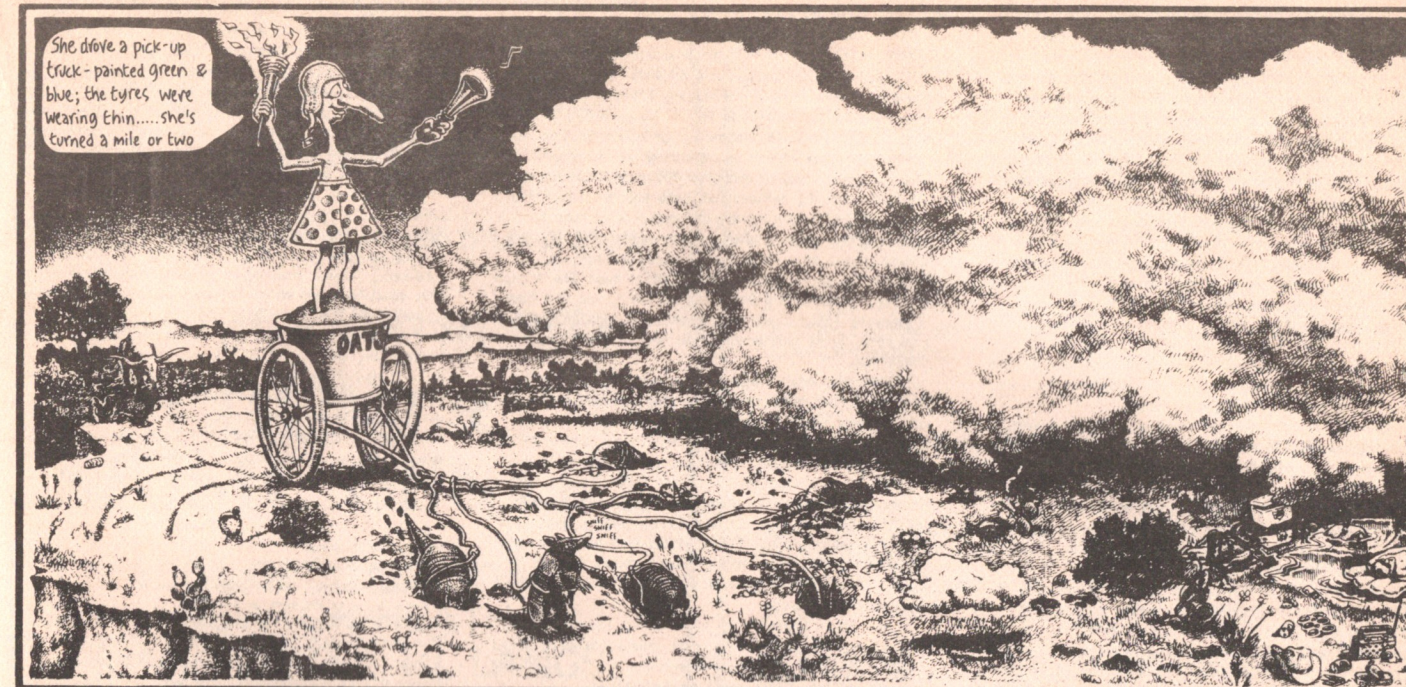


BITS & PIECES

New Canterbury-based psychedelic group the Soft Machine currently recording their debut single at Advision Studios with American producer Kim Fowley... latest CBS signing, One In A Million, features 13 year old lead guitar prodigy Jimmy McCullough... 'Nashville Cats' is the latest Lovin' Spoonful single to make the American Top 30... The Roundhouse, adopted home of London's flower power movement, is to present an 'Uncommon Market' at the end of this month. Sponsored by the International Times, the event will feature top underground groups, sidestalls and a 56 gallon jelly... Eric Clapton and Jack Bruce of Cream, whose latest single 'I Feel Free' entered the charts this week, went shopping for new instruments during their recent stay in New York. "Our friends in the Blues Project put us on to a guy called Dan Armstrong, who adapts normal guitars to his own specifications - he's a genius", says Jack Bruce. "I bought a Danelectro bass and Eric bought a customised 6-string"...

Graham Nash of the Hollies is raving over the new Simon & Garfunkel album, 'Parsley Sage Rosemary & Thyme' - "It's a gas", he says. The Hollies have just taken delivery of a new Swedish PA - "It cost £1000", says Nash, "but I can't give you any more details; it took five years of research to make it, and we're sworn to secrecy when it comes to talking about it"... The Beach Boys plan to launch their own record label: Brother Records... rumours about Bob Dylan, laid up since his motorcycle accident last year, proliferate; people are now saying that his continued absence from the public eye revolves around negotiations with a new record company. The mystery surrounding his retreat will heighten demand for his first album for the new label - probably MGM Records... N.Y. folksinger Stefan Grossman is supplementing his gig income by giving "taped guitar lessons - from country blues to ragtime"... music critic Paul Nelson, writing in Sing Out magazine, is over the moon about the quality of last year's rock albums - particularly 'Blonde On Blonde', 'Revolver' and 'Aftermath'. Says Nelson: "If Dylan is Dostoevsky, and the Beatles James Joyce, it comes as a pleasant surprise to learn that the Rolling Stones may be none other than D.H. Lawrence"... talking to Derek Jewell in this week's Sunday Times, Paul McCartney says of the Beatles: "Now we're ready to go our own ways; we'll work together only if we miss each other - then it'll be hobby work". Asked about his new moustache, Paul said: "It's part of breaking up the Beatles. I no longer believe in that image; I am no longer one of the four mop tops". Despite the apparent finality of Paul's words, people in the know suggest that the Beatles will not break up - that their finest hour is yet to come. Brian Epstein is remaining silent on the matter... 'Tarantula', the novel which Dylan completed last March and which was due for publication in August, has been withdrawn from scheduled publication at the author's request. Some say he wishes to re-write it, others suggest that he will never allow it to be published... Joan Baez has announced her intention of suing cartoonist Al Capp over "the obvious and vicious characterisation" of Joanie Phoebe in the syndicated Li'l Abner strip.

This month's issue of Pack Pager was researched and put together by Mac Garry, Shannon Bodine and Tom Baker.



R · E · V · I · E · W · S

'Hotel California'
THE EAGLES
Asylum K 53051

"There's talk on the street, it sounds so familiar
Great expectations, everybody's watching you,
People you meet, they all seem to know you,
Even your old friends treat you like you're something new".

Before I ever heard 'Hotel California', I told Pete I wanted to review it... a really dumb move on my part. I find album reviews so difficult to write. If you want proof, this is already my sixth attempt to get together this one. I've listened to it over thirty times, and I can't get rid of the critical hat I'm wearing and let the music take over, or not, just like on any other album. Not that the Eagles are just like any other group. Their 'Desperado' rates among my all time favourite albums, so the adrenalin flow increases at the prospect of anything new from them. I guess a lot of you share these expectations... meeting them will be tough for any group to do each time.

Amid my confusion at trying to coherently express my feelings for 'Hotel California', I went back and played through all their previous albums. 'Take It Easy', 'Night-gale', 'Peaceful Easy Feeling' from their debut; 'Tequila Sunrise', 'Saturday Night' from 'Desperado'; 'Already Gone', 'Midnight Flyer', 'My Man', 'O! 51', 'Best Of My Love' from 'On The Border'; 'Hollywood Waltz', 'Lyn' Eyes', 'After The Thrill Is Gone' from 'One Of These Nights'. These were the songs that epitomised what Eagles were for me. Great, great pop music. But over the years since 'Eagles' in 1972 there have been changes in personnel and, inevitably I suppose, changes in musical direction. I know I prefer the group as they were in the early days. Can the new album convince me my doubts were unjustified?

"You look in her eyes, the music begins to play,
Hopeless romantics here we go again,
But after a while you're looking the other way,
It's those restless hearts that never mend"

Well, my first impression was "This Eagle's a turkey", but repeated listening has insinuated at least three of the songs into my skull. Out of a possible eight, that's not a bad average. When the stylus first settled into the title track and I heard a reggae-tinged bass line and Caribbean influenced vocal delivery, I was really

thrown. Now I'm checked in, even though I do think it is a rather incongruous introduction to the Californian concept.

No such trouble with 'New Kid In Town', which will be a hit single by the time you read this. The nearest thing to archetypal Eagles you get on this album, and Glenn Frey's only lead vocal outing. Shame! Not that I'm decrying Don Henley's fine singing. Perhaps the answer would have been to have more than eight songs next time around.

'Life In The Fast Lane' follows which will appeal to those who like their Eagles rocking. Joe Walsh takes the lead guitar credit here before switching to organ for the side's closing track, 'Wasted Time'. It isn't, but for me the song does go on a little too long and fails to completely capture attention.

Over to the other side for a quick orchestral reprise of that song before more rocking. 'Victim Of Love' has Don Felder on lead guitar duelling with Joe Walsh on slide. Don Henley is the lead vocalist again, but he steps aside for the next two. 'Pretty Maids All In A Row' is Joe Walsh's song, so he sings it. I really wish he wouldn't and that's my problem. I can't enjoy his singing, and no amount of lush background harmonising can overcome my basic aversion to it though it does get a bit touch and go near the end.

Randy Meisner is another matter altogether, and he moves on to lead on his 'Try And Love Again'. The band's democratic approach is further emphasised by Glenn Frey's lovely lead guitar work. On then to the big finale. If the overall concept of the album has become blurred previously, it is brought back sharply into focus here. We are lousing up our environment, and the Eagles want us to know it will soon be too late. Maybe next time they, or somebody of equal stature, will concern themselves with all those humans who louse up their bodily environment by feeding drugs into every possible permutation of vein and orifice. Or maybe they won't.

"There's talk on the street it's there to remind you
It doesn't really matter which side you're on,
You're walking away and they're talking behind you,
They will never forget you till somebody new comes along",

Talking about their music on Capital Radio recently, Glenn Frey said: "Ballads and the country rock type of music has come very easy to us and always will, and the rock'n'roll is something that we've wanted to get out more on each record. Also the

R&B influence. This is really just to broaden our base too; I mean, we love all kinds of music..." Despite any reservations I may have about 'Hotel California', they have got to be given full marks for not sitting back and taking it easy. I just hope that as they attempt to broaden their horizons, Eagles will not forget the rich musical heritage they have already introduced into my environment. For my money, when they concentrate on what they do best they are, quite simply, the best.

Peter O'Brien

'Big Towne 2061'
PARIS
Capitol EA-ST 11560

Each year, it seems, throws up a band who, while working in the broad pop/rock field, manage through their approach to songwriting and the group sound to come up with something fresh and unique. In '74 there was Sparks, who I didn't particularly care for; in '75 Pavlov's Dog, who I very much did care for; and from the dying embers of '76... Paris.

Paris are Robert Welch, who was with Fleetwood Mac; Glenn Cornick, late of Jethro Tull and Wild Turkey; and drummer Hunt Sales, who was with Todd Rundgren a while back, and whose father is Soupy Sales, America's answer to Hughie Green. Forget the background though, because Paris don't sound like Fleetwood Mac, or Jethro Tull, or anybody else for that matter. There are hints of influences, certainly, from the Shadows to Nils Lofgren, from the Beatles to Little Feat - but the performance and the production (by Bob Hughes, who did the Burritos classic third album) have an identity all of their own.

All ten numbers are Welch originals, and despite the futuristic title track and bizarre album sleeve, they deal for the most part with fairly standard rock subjects... which basically means women and their foibles, especially on side two.

Lyrically the songs are interesting if not outstanding, but what is exciting is the music. Cornick was always a great bass player, and he's now added keyboards to his armoury, providing a lush, kaleidoscopic backdrop; Mr. Sales has a lovely syncopated drum style, reminiscent of the mighty Richie Hayward; and Welch's guitar playing ranges from a spidery, Can-like rhythm on the title track to lyrical lead on 'Janie'.

The production places a heavy reliance on phasing and echo, but while such effects have been frequently abused in the past, they play a crucial part in Paris' very distinctive sound. Along with the idiosyn-

cratic styles of the three instrumentalists, the production gives an ethereal, other-worldly quality to what are relatively mainstream, though very strong, songs. The result is a kind of tension between opposites that is strangely compelling.

The highlights of the album are cunningly positioned at either end of the programme. 'Blue Robin' opens with Hank Marvin tremoloed guitar and a vocal summoning up memories of Peter Green... an infectiously quirky number that might even make a good single. The real tour-de-force, however, comes right at the end with 'Janie' - seven minutes worth of magic that starts with an extended keyboard collage that sounds as if it's based on an Elizabethan piece, before developing into a majestic, dynamically sustained ballad that's a complete knock-out.

Of the eight songs that come between, the only one I really don't think works is 'Money Love', a somewhat jokey affair based mostly on one chord. Apart from that I really can't come up with a single important criticism. 'Pale Horse, Pale Rider' is a beautifully mysterious, floating number; 'New Orleans' and 'I in 10' rock more, but in the most sinuous manner imaginable; while 'Outlaw Game' is like no cowboy song you've ever heard. A particularly notable feature of nearly all the tracks is the backing vocals, the use of which is imaginative and immaculately tasteful.

Good taste was not something of which Paris' first album, from earlier last year, could reasonably be accused, so the excellence of this album is all the more surprising. I don't know what's prompted their change of direction and raising of standards in the intervening months, though, I'm just glad... because 'Big Towne 2061' is one of the most unexpected pleasures of the last year, and Paris' potential is quite awesome.

Paul Kendall.

'How Late'll Ya Play Till?'
DAVID BROMBERG BAND
Fantasy Import

At a time when instrumental virtuosity seems to be undervalued, and is to some extent replaced by skull-numbing mindlessness disguised rather shabbily as "revolution", a record like this comes as a very welcome relief.

One of the more pleasant tasks I had during my sojourn at Caramba Badger Stoa was looking after Bromberg and Tom Rush at the Cambridge Folk Festival, where they both showed themselves to be particularly ace cats. Almost immediately after their triumphs in front of the finger-in-the-ear brigade, they were both dropped by my erstwhile employers, and while I haven't heard anything of Tom Rush since then, it's good that Fantasy have had the good sense to pick up Bromberg - it can only be a matter of time before his talents and those of his band are recognised by record buyers as much as they are by live audiences.

Perhaps to that end, this fifth episode in the Bromberg saga is a double, half studio and half live, and definitely a good way to capture the virtuoso playing of the remarkable musicians who make up the band.

The rhythm section of Steve Mosley and Hugh McDonald have been with Bromberg for some time. The fact is that they must enjoy it, because they play sessions for artists like Gladys Knight and Phoebe Snow, and presumably have had other offers. Then there's the astonishing Dick Fegy (pronounced Fiji, by the way), a multi-instrumental string player, George Kinder on fiddle, Curt Linberg on trombone, John Firmin on reeds, and of course the leader on various guitars and vocals.

It's never quite as simple as that, actually. On the studio side there's help here and there from Bernie Leadon, Herb Pedersen, Hank de Vito, Jim Rothermel, Dr. John and Phoebe Snow, none of whom should need further explanation, plus guest spots from several previous members of the band, like Peter Ecklund (of Hungry Chuck, trivia lovers), the amazing Brantley Kearns, and Evan Stover.

Killers, each and every one.

The material ranges from the expected fiddle medley, through a couple of Robert Johnsons, the latter of which 'Come On In My Kitchen' has Bromberg literally making his axe talk. Check it, if you don't believe me... Several Bromberg originals are also present, not least a remake of 'Danger Man', previously on the 'Wanted Dead Or Alive' album, when he was backed by the Grateful Dead more or less, and here coming on like a James Brown job. Also very good are 'Katskill Serenade', a boozier's soliloquy, and 'Will Not Be Your Fool', and eight minute 12 bar, while Ian Tyson's 'Summer Wages' is beautifully played, and decorated in style by Hank de Vito.

There's only one track which doesn't make it for me, and it's the longest, the overlong 'Bullfrog Blues', which Bromberg extends to over 16 minutes completely solo. Maybe you need to see him doing it... Everything else is just fine, with more than one potential single, and this could be the one to put David Bromberg into the more commercial field than his previously 'esoteric' label, which one must admit he has earned to a great extent because of his eclecticism.

One last thing - if this only comes out as a single LP here, get the import. You won't regret the extra money for a moment. Three gold stars and an ink tick.

John Tobler

'Metallic KO'
IGGY & THE STOOGES
Skydog SG1S 008

You may have noticed this ugly creature nestling in my Fave LPs of '76 list in Mac's column. This isn't a bad place to explain it's presence.

Firstly it's there because I was slaving and craving for new Stooges stuff - this is the Ig's first vinyl offering since 1972's classic 'Raw Power', and even if it's not the rampant sizzler I'd anticipated (well not all of it), it still packs a punch, albeit a rather muffled one. Yes, the sound is on the whole pretty crappy. In fact this is really no more than a well-dressed bootleg, which would probably get a medium-good grade in one of those old 'Trade Mark of Quality' catalogues.

However, the album's a must if you're an Ig fan or can work wonders with your sound system, and I'm glad it's on release. We need - and have since the first Stooges LP in 1968 - Iggy to inject danger and excitement into the scene. He's really the daddy of the New Wave - and could probably still show a lot of them where to get off.

Luckily Iggy is audible in all his obscene raging glory throughout. Stun guitarist James Williamson isn't so lucky. The thin sound is basically piano, tinny drums and a guitar/bass rumble, occasionally penetrated by James' shattered-glass solos.

So why is this a great LP then? The answer lies in Side Two. Side One, recorded in '73 at the Michigan Palace, Detroit, boasts two songs from 'Raw Power' - the title track and 'Gimme Danger', but such is the sound that neither eclipses the studio versions. 'Head On' is a good number, but does not make the side great.

No, it's side two where we find the action... and I mean action. Recorded at the last Stooges gig at the same place in 1974 it's really a confrontation twist Ig and rowdy/high-spirited/unfriendly audience.

They're throwing everything at him - bottles, ice and lots of eggs. Ig hurls back a barrage of abuse, like "You can throw all the ice you want - you're paying 5 dollars and I'm making 10,000... so screw ya!" or "You pricks can throw any goddam thing in the world and your girl friend will still love me... you jealous cocksuckers!" Good stuff, huh? You can even hear the bottles smashing on mike-stands!

It's Iggy's legendary masochistic hate/love relationship with his audience captured on vinyl. And if only because I was never fortunate enough to see it live, I'm grateful for that. The numbers on this side are pretty neat too, and the sound is much better.

You get a lengthy 'Rich Bitch', which boasts great energy spurts, vicious vocals and unprintable lyrics; 'Got My Cock In My Pocket', a classic Stooges rip-snorter of speaker-storming proportions; and to cap it all, a crunching version of 'Louie Louie'. 'Metallic K.O.' will do nicely until Iggy's forthcoming studio offering recorded with Bowie. Then all we'll need are some gigs.

Oh, while I'm here, a mention for Europe's only Iggy Pop Fan Club, which is probably the best value and most worthwhile organisation of its kind in the world. I mean, when you join you get copies of the club's own mag 'Honey That Ain't No Romance', which boasts hot pix of Ig and the luscious unclothed form of Iggy's only true fan, Mechthild. You also receive other goodies like membership card and an Iggy patch. I've got mine, get yours by sending £1 to the fan club c/o Harald Inhulsen, Hagenring 21, 3300 Braunschweig, West Germany. This has been an Iggy public service announcement.

Kris Needs

'Zoot Allures'
FRANK ZAPPA
Warner Bros. K56298

Ladeez'n! Gennelmen... Preezinggg... the amazing Francis Vincent Zappa! He sings, he mutters, he leers, he plays (just about anything), he writes, he produces, he controls!! Mellifluous multi-instrumental manipulation of maximum magnificence! Lewd lyricism leaving Linda Lovelace lagging in latent lasciviousness!! Scientific savoir faire conspicuous in scintillating sound and sensational sonority!!! All on his hot new waxing...

It seems strange for a man who has invariably specialised in the extracting, directing and editing of other people's talents to come up suddenly with a bona fide 'solo' album, but that's almost exactly what Zappa's done with 'Zoot Allures'. With the exception of the title track and the live recording of 'Black Napkins', he does almost everything himself (apart from the drumming, which is admirably handled by Terry Bozzio), and the end result - if not Zappa's quintessential album - is certainly a highly entertaining one.

Both lyrically and musically it's far more instantly accessible than 'One Size Fits All', and in fact harkens back to 'Overnight Sensation' (which has just gone gold in the States, incidentally), with much more emphasis on Zappa's characteristically licentious vocals and often under-exposed guitar work. The fact that 'Zoot Allures' is more or less a one man show does mean that peripheral delights like George Duke's keyboard playing are missing, but it also cuts down completely on the vocal and instrumental excesses of which Zappa is sometimes guilty when he has a cast of millions at his disposal.

The album is structured so that it runs with alternate vocal and instrumental tracks almost throughout, which for those who - like myself - rate Zappa's guitar playing highly is good news indeed. The afore-mentioned 'Black Napkins' shows him off to especially good effect against a loosely-knit backing, while 'Friendly Little Finger' and the title track both feature Ruth Underwood on marimba. On the former she does a brief intro full of Eastern promise before Zappa bursts in spraying lead and bass runs in all directions; and the latter is in a mellow mood, with more in the way of interplay between the instruments.

The rest is pretty much standard Zappa satirical/off-beat fare, the tour-de-force being 'The Torture Never Stops'... a pleasant little ditty which rambles on for ten minutes on the subject of life in and around the torture chamber, with Mr. Z intoning lyrics about "sinister midgets" and "evil princes" with enormous relish. Like 'Dinah Moe Humm' from 'Overnight Sensation', it sounds at first like a piece of superficial trivia, but each listening reveals new touches in the production and instrumentation. A great one to listen to in the wee small hours when the mood is... err... relaxed.

'Ms. Pinky' and 'Wonderful Wino' (composed in partnership with ex-Mothers bassist Jeff Simmonds) are quite amusing

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LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	ALBUM TRACK (Or single*)	ARTISTE	NUMBER	Months on the Chart
9	1	Louisa On A Horse	JOHN OTWAY & W.W.B.	Track 2094 133*	2
6	2	The Fuse	JACKSON BROWNE	Asylum K53048	2
8	3	Little Does She Know	KURSAAL FLYERS	CBS 81622	3
10	4	Special Love Song	DELBERT McCLINTON	ABC ABCD 959	3
17	5	Rosarita	TOM JANS	Columbia PC 34292	3
14	6	You Never Wanted Me Babe	FAIRPORT CONVENTION	Nondescript	2
-	7	Return Of The Grievous Angel	GRAM PARSONS	Reprise K54018	32
24	8	Down To Zero	JOAN ARMATRADING	A&M AMLH 64588	2
21	9	Spoon River	STEVE GOODMAN	Asylum K53025	2
4	10	Desperados Under The Eaves	WARREN ZEVON	Asylum K53039	7
1	11	Memory Motel	ROLLING STONES	Rolling Stones COC 59106	8
-	12	Do Ya	THE MOVE	Harvest SHSP 4035	1
16	13	Tangled Up In Blue	BOB DYLAN	CBS 69097	19
-	14	Talk To Me (Of Mendocino)	THE McGARRIGLES	Warner Bros. K56218	1
-	15	Janie	PARIS	Capitol EA-ST11560	1
-	16	The Last Resort	THE EAGLES	Asylum K53051	1
5	17	Rhiannon	FLEETWOOD MAC	Reprise K54043	7
-	18	Mama Open Up	FLO & EDDIE	CBS 81509	1
-	19	Slow Death	FLAMIN' GROOVIES	United Artists REM 406*	9
18	20	Topanga	JOHN PHILLIPS	Dunhill DS 50077	80
11	21	Rebecca	FLO & EDDIE	Columbia PC 33554	13
-	22	Country Time Rhymes	FIFTH AVENUE BAND	Reprise RSLP 6369	10
2	23	Shake Some Action	FLAMIN' GROOVIES	Sire 9103 251	8
-	24	Henrietta	DOUG SAHM	Texas Re-Cord 108*	1
28	25	Sail Away	RANDY NEWMAN	Reprise K44185	20
-	26	Daddy Come And Get Me	DOLLY PARTON	RCA LSA 3101	6
3	27	Can I make It Last	BOZ SCAGGS	CBS 64248	19
22	28	Clang Of The Yankee Reaper	VAN DYKE PARKS	Warner Bros. K56161	10
12	29	Only Sixteen	DR. HOOK	Capitol E-ST 11397	13
7	30	So It Goes	NICK LOWE	Stiff BUY 1*	5

Bubbling Under:

Furry Sings The Blues
The Torture Never Stops
Beth
Learning The Game
Nubian Sundance
The Devil Just Called My Name

JONI MITCHELL
FRANK ZAPPA
KISS
ANDREW GOLD
WEATHER REPORT
SIMON STOKES
Asylum K53053
Warner Bros K56298
Casablanca CBX 519
Asylum K53052
CBS 80027
Spindizzy KZ 32075

— concerned with "lonely person devices" and alcoholic excess respectively — but both pale beside 'Find Her Finer', one of the most infectious tunes that Zappa has written of late and taken at a superbly sleazy pace, and 'Disco Boy', which adopts a stance reminiscent of the Tubes' 'Slipped My Disco' and is similarly irresistible. That only leaves 'Wind Up Work-in' In A Gas Station', the opening track and also the shortest — thankfully, because it's just a mite cacophonous.

Like I said, 'Zoot Allures' isn't as intense or provocative as Zappa at his peak (cf. 'We're Only In It For The Money' or 'Hot Rats'), but it's fine, witty music nevertheless. Did you expect less?

The cover, by the way, depicts the good Francis attempting to break the world record for keeping a ferret in one's trousers. The front sees him, surrounded by young assistants, looking relaxed and confident as the contest begins. The rear shot, however, taken some six hours and 47 minutes later, shows a sorry sight with the assistants all paralysed by boredom, and the challenger obviously in some discomfort shortly before his bid was brought to a most unpleasant end. Fortunately he should be fit and well again in time for his European tour, during which it is rumoured that a further attempt will be made before a specially invited audience at the Royal Albert Hall.

Paul Kendall

'The Man Who Gave The Beatles Away'
ALLAN WILLIAMS Cornet Books 90p

'The Bryan Ferry Story'
REX BALFOUR M.Dempsey Books £1.50p

Over the festive season, during those brief moments when I wasn't coaxing my weakened body into even more bestial acts of excess, I managed to read a few books... and it struck me as a good idea to review the odd tome in Zigzag. I thought I'd start with a couple of paperbacks: the one relatively cheap and interesting, the other relatively expensive and awful.

MEMORIES OF MERSEY BEAT

I actually paid money for 'The Man Who Gave The Beatles Away', and I don't regret it. A work of great literary merit this is not — in fact I have seen better writing in Melody Maker — but it does provide some very interesting insights into the early Beatles jigsaw.

While depicting, quite vividly in places, the kind of rigours the Beatles were forced to endure during their "dues paying" period, the author and his ghost writer William Marshall (the Daily Mirror's man in Liverpool) have obviously taken the News Of The World line of approach — liberally sprinkling their text with stories of prostitutes, faeces, venereal disease, transvestite alliances, pills, squalor and general crudity, including an episode where the Beatles evidently derived great amusement from urinating over some passing nuns. (This no doubt is the incident which won them their MBEs). Small wonder that John Lennon, in his liner notes, includes the following disclaimer: "Certain events and people, I do not remember in any way".

On top of this, we have tales of gun-toting Kraut gangsters, Nazi-baiting, George and Paul being jailed and deported, people being kicked to death as the lads played, effigies of Christ being decorated with French letters, and enough swearing to make Noele Gordon blanch, wilt, roll over and die. Loveable little moptops? This bunch make the Sex Pistols look like divinity students.

For added colour, the author calls the Beatles cunts and fuckers at every opportunity, and generally laces his narrative with enough repugnant phrases to give the Pope a multiple cardiac arrest.

One of the more interesting aspects of the book is Williams' unwitting self psych-

oanalysis. One certainly can't blame the Beatles for dumping him; not only was his skill as a manager severely handicapped by a marked lack of competence, aptitude or business acumen, he also seems to have been a rather coarse and pugnacious little horror. His capacity for alcohol ("We tore through the darkened streets doing speeds up to ninety. I was so pissed I lost the way".) can't have been his greatest asset in guiding their careers either.

The pages where Epstein slips into the author's caustic vision are especially amusing (Williams comes off as the brash and worldly professional, whereas Epstein is seen as the ineffectual, soft-centred homosexual "on a collision course with an early death"), and almost every chapter is imbued with the hindsight knowledge that the Beatles would go on to become the most colossal money-spinner in the history of entertainment... "who could have known that in a few years"...

A thoroughly sordid and nasty little pot-boiler it may be, but I found it immensely readable, enjoyable and instructive.

Frankly, I think it's about time for John Lennon to spend a year or so writing his autobiography. For my money it would be a damned sight more interesting than yet another patchy selection of unmemorable recordings. It wouldn't hurt George to stay out of the studio for a while either. If Winston Churchill could do it...

Anyway, what about the Ferry book? Forget it... it's terrible. Since the publisher had the grace to send me a copy of this slim volume, however, I thought I should read it.

I am by no means Bryan Ferry's greatest fan, but I do think a man of his achievements deserves a more considered biography than this superficial little hash-up. Short on detail, long on photos of Ferry and his cronies in various postures, and ludicrously expensive: £1.50 for a paperback containing about 33% less text than the average issue of Zigzag.

Not the bargain of the month.

Mac Garry

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28 LED ZEPPELIN • THE NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND • KIM FOWLEY • KEVIN AYERS • LOVE • SOFT MACHINE • FAMILY TREE • JP DONLEAVY • THE BYRDS Chapter 2

29 GENESIS • THE EAGLES • CAPTAIN BEEFHEART • THE EVERLY BROS • THE BYRDS Pt 3

30 TO 36 INCLUSIVE ARE COMPLETELY GONE, SO PLEASE DON'T SEND FOR 'EM

37 CHARLIE WATTS • MIGHTY BABY • THE GRATEFUL DEAD • NILS LOFGREN • COUNTRY JOE

38 QUICKSILVER MESSENGER SERVICE • RICHARD GREENE • FAMILY TREE • LOGGINS & MESSINA • JOHN STEWART • CAPT BEEFHEART

39 MICHAEL NESMITH • STEVE MILLER • RALPH METELL • EVAN PARKER • LITTLE ELSE

40 TO 43 ARE ALL GONE TOO, I'M SORRY TO SAY

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61 DR FEELGOOD • PROCOL HARUM • BONNIE RAITT • OZARK MOUNTAIN DAREDEVILS • DILLARDS • BOONE AND JOCKO

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64 LITTLE FEAT • MCGARRIGLE SISTERS • BAND CALLED "O" • JACKSON BROWNE • THE FLAMIN' GROOVIES • MATTHEWS • BURRITOS

65 THE BEACH BOYS • TED NUGENT • JOEL SCOTT HILL • LINDA RONSTADT • THE RAMONES • WARREN ZEVON

66 JEFFERSON STARSHIP • FAMILY TREE & INTERVIEW • BE BOP DELUXE • JESSE WINCHESTER • TED NUGENT • THE STRANGLERS

67 EAGLES • KURSAR FLYERS • JOHN WALTERS • ANDREW GOLD • ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL • FLEETWOOD MAC • BACK-DAGER

68 JACKSON BROWNE • IAN MATTHEWS • SANTANA • GRAHAM PARKER & THE RUMOUR • JOHN WALTERS • JANUARY 1967

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One thing was certain, that the white cat had nothing to do with it; it was the black kitten's fault entirely.

Oh, what a superbly merrie festive season! Christmas was a joyful business, and the New Year was even more exhilarating and exciting. I had a bet with "local superstar" John Otway, which matured on New Year's Eve... and like the noble and gracious gentleman he is, he (having lost the wager) stumped up fifty smackers... all of which I blew on New Year celebrations for a pubful of Aylesbury loonies.

What a night...culminating in a spirited, cross-armed, roof-raising, high-speed whirling version of that traditional year ender/opener 'Auld Lang Syne' - led with gusto by John Wilson from the Dodgers, Frankie Walsh from Tamburlaine, and most of the Zigzag team. (Such a change from last year's wretched festivities, which were marred - as you may recall - by the "mince pies incident" in the Dark Lantern - a hostelry which hasn't been graced by our presence since).

Having stumbled most blearily to my bed, I was awoken at 3 a.m. by no less a person than Michael Watts from Melody Maker... he proceeded to deliver a veritable torrent of abuse and foul-mouthed oaths down the telephone before collapsing in an inaudible drunken slump - whereupon his girlfriend took the phone and apologised for his appalling behaviour.

A joke is a joke, but frankly I am becoming rather weary of these irksome chaps from MM... and this latest episode only hours after I'd made a resolution, nay a promise, to try and develop a patient indifference towards the puerile, noisy and ignorant writers who convert larger and larger areas of newsprint into puddles of pap. Personally, I stopped reading Melody Maker months ago, and in fact I don't think I know of anybody who reads it anymore... which is why I'm surprised that their writers don't try to improve the standard of their publication, rather than devote their energies to sending me witless postcards and making obscene phone calls in the middle of the night. What on earth Watts was doing out of bed at three o'clock in the morning, God only knows. There again, if I made my living by writing for Melody Maker, I doubt if I could sleep at night.

Anyway, let's move on to brighter pastures. May I take this opportunity of wishing all you wonderful folks out there a bounteous and happy new year... let's hope '77 is the biggest yet! As Frank Zappa once said: "It's so fucking great to be alive, ladies and gentlemen" - and how right he was.

Over yonder you'll see the results of the most popular poll we've ever conducted (there must be a conclusion to be drawn there) - and there's the winner of Nick Lowe's old boots! What's left of the Metropolitan Police Poro Squad might be a little perturbed if we published his delightfully witty sexual fantasy - but you would be astonished what a fertile imagination that innocent looking little choir-boy has! His name is Mick Channer, and he comes from Gateshead. We whisked him and his mate down to snowy Bucks County to participate in the Friars Christmas Party with Eddie & The Hot Rods, Orchi, Father Christmas and six million balloons - and since he turned out to be much younger than I'd expected, we got the two youngsters of the Zigzag staff to make the presentation... the chuckling and safety pin festooned Kris Needs, and the scintillating Magenta de Vine (who has obviously set his mind roving to further field of fantasy).

The results of the poll are rather fascinating, I think you'll agree - though I must admit I've never heard of many of these ladies... in fact, I've only just been informed that the Bionic Woman and Lindsay Wagner are, in fact, one and the same (and, obviously, I'm not the only one who was unaware of that! We only watch high-brow programmes like 'Crossroads' up here... the Bionic Woman indeed!)

OK... special mention must go to the following for their particularly interesting ideas: Alex Gunningham, Alan Ashworth, S.J. Makin, P. Grainger, Carlton Morgan,



Geoffrey Tyrell

OVER THE GARDEN WALL

and Anne Brothers... and in case you're wondering why no men are represented in the list, that's because the poll drew a 90% male response, and it seemed only reasonable to restrict it to the names of ladies. (Or, if you want to know the real reason - as inferred by Steve Lake on his famous postcard - "Zigzag is subsidised by the Klu Klux Klan and the National Front".)

For the poll this month please send me your list of TEN FAVOURITE BOB DYLAN SONGS, in order of preference. Send them, as usual, to The Famous Mac Garry, c/o Yeoman Cottage, North Marston, Buckingham MK18 3PH. Is Dylan still the king? Indisputably!

Well, I've got to say that 1976 was a brilliant year for records - let's hope this year will be as good... though present evidence and trends would indicate otherwise: the only review record received so far this year has been "It Takes All Night Long (Parts 1 & 2)" by Gary Glitter!

There were some great concerts last year too, but I feel it my duty to nominate a special prize for the providers of the worst concert of the year!

This must go to Messrs. Crosby and Nash, who were good enough to grace our shores with just about the shoddiest package I've ever seen in my life. Their concert at the Hammersmith Odeon was a feeble little one horse display of noblesse oblige -

characterised by ingratiatingly matey jokes about the years of having to eat cheeseburgers and the subtle difference between sex and politics, tagged into an endless stream of tiresomely predictable praise of the audience - to convince them that they were getting their money's worth... "We're gonna make this a real long concert" (it was, mercifully, one of the shortest evening's entertainment I've known)... "We're really having fun tonight" (I sure as hell wasn't), etc. Their musicianship was a sidesplitter; they made the Troggs sound like Muscle Shoals session men. What somebody like David Lindley was doing allowing himself to be seen dead in this joke of a show, this musically indefensible display of nonsense, I don't know.

I only stayed till the end to see David Lindley, and as Kendall and I chatted to him backstage, Crosby, who had cancelled all interviews on the grounds that he was "too exhausted", sauntered past down the corridor looking as fresh as a Frenchman on a mid-morning tart-hunting expedition.

Oh well, never mind, it's all showbiz, and we wouldn't be spending so much time writing about it if we didn't love it so much. Anyway, that's it for another moon... see you soon.

And the ashes blew towards us, with the salt wind from the sea.

Rear Admiral Mac Garry

YOUR TOP 75 FANTASY BED COMPANIONS

ZIGZAG READERS' POLL • DEC 1976

- 1 LINDA RONSTADT
- 2 BRIGITTE BARDOT
- 3 EMMYLOU HARRIS
- 4 SONJA KRISTINA
- 5 JOANNA LUMLEY
- 6 JACKIE FOX
- 7 NICO
- 8 JOAN JETT
- 9 BONNIE RAITT
- 10 CHERRIE CURRIE
- 11 GRACE SLICK
- 12 JONI MITCHELL
- 13 SANDY WEST
- 14 THE BIONIC WOMAN
- 15 PATTI SMITH
- 16 ANGELA RIPON
- 17 DOLLY PARTON
- 18 LITA FORD
- 19 BLONDE IN ABBA
- 20 TWIGGY
- 21 OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN
- 22 TINA TURNER
- 23 ELIZABETH TAYLOR
- 24 MIA FARROW
- 25 ELISABETH SLADEN
- 26 FAYE DUNAWAY
- 27 MARIA MULDAUR
- 28 BEVERLEY PILKINGTON
- 29 TANYA TUCKER
- 30 BRITT ECKLUND
- 31 KIKI DEE
- 32 LINSEY DE PAUL
- 33 ELKE BROOKS
- 34 HELEN MIRREN
- 35 DIANA RIGG
- 36 JANE FONDA
- 37 BRUNETTE IN ABBA
- 38 JOAN ARMATRADE
- 39 LINDSAY COOPER
- 40 BARBARA STREISAND
- 41 MADELINE SMITH
- 42 GILLIAN DUXBURY
- 43 DEBBIE BRILL
- 44 BRIDGET ST. JOHN
- 45 CAROLE GRANT
- 46 URSULA ANDRESS
- 47 CAROLE GRIMES
- 48 JEANNE MOREAU
- 49 MELANIE
- 50 CLAUDIA LENNEAR
- 51 SUSAN GEORGE
- 52 MICHELLE PHILLIPS
- 53 JULIE CHRISTIE
- 54 TINA CHARLES
- 55 ANITA PALLEMBERG
- 56 JENNY AGUTTER
- 57 SUE LAWLEY
- 58 SALLY JAMES
- 59 CARLY SIMON
- 60 JENNY HANLEY
- 61 ANNIE HASLAM
- 62 BABS LORD
- 63 LINDA LOVEACE
- 64 DIANE SOLOMON
- 65 FIONA RICHMOND
- 66 VALERIE SINGLETON
- 67 STEVIE NICKS
- 68 JILL SAWARD
- 69 LINDSAY WAGNER
- 70 LESLEY DUNLOP
- 71 JULIE TIPPETT
- 72 SHIRLEY BASSEY
- 73 NINA CARTER
- 74 DEE DEE WILDE
- 75 LENA ZAVERONI

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